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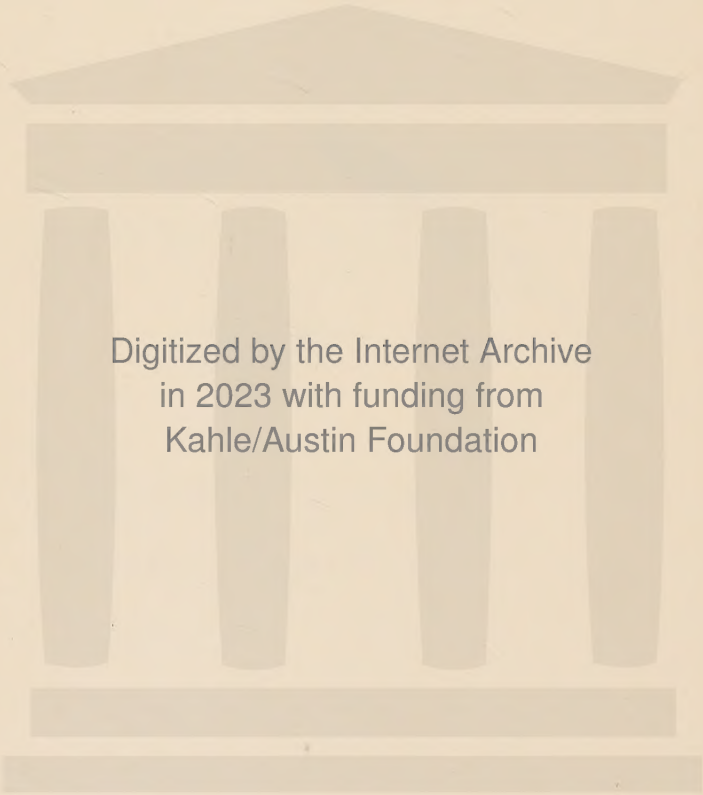
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BY

OSWALD SPENGLER

THE DECLINE OF THE WEST

MAN AND TECHNICS

THE HOUR OF DECISION

THESE ARE BORZOI BOOKS, PUBLISHED BY

Alfred · A · Knopf

TODAY AND DESTINY

Today and Destiny

VITAL EXCERPTS FROM
THE DECLINE OF THE WEST
OF
OSWALD SPENGLER

Arranged with an Introduction and Commentary
by
EDWIN FRANDEN DAKIN

Based on the text of the Authorized Translation of
Charles Francis Atkinson

NEW YORK: ALFRED A. KNOPF

1940

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FIRST EDITION

TO

ALFRED A. KNOPF

whose own Destiny it has been
to give to our part of the West
the three deeply significant studies of our time:

Spengler's THE DECLINE OF THE WEST
Ouspensky's TERTIUM ORGANUM
Pearl's THE BIOLOGY OF POPULATION GROWTH

This attempt to bring one of them
within the dimensions of a more convenient
working tool for the average reader
in a troubled day
IS AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED

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TODAY AND DESTINY

INTRODUCTION

It may be regarded as a matter of fundamental patriotism, in this era, to try to put Spengler in the reading range of those responsible for American policy. Which is to say, of the many.

For Spengler, contrary to some of the ideas of those who have not read him, tends to be a complete realist in his views of the world and its political events. A people like our own, living in perennial conflict between what it wants to believe and what it has to do – as Thurman Arnold would put it – will perhaps need some realistic ballast rather desperately, as it sails through the tempestuous seas indicated for the next few years.

It is probably not to be expected that most readers will approach Spengler in agreement with his judgments on the weaknesses of "democracy" and the theories of the "intellectuals." It can only be said that, since today's events seem combined largely to confirm Spengler, his views are hardly to be ignored; – at least, by those citizens determined to keep the United States impregnable at

whatever cost is necessary, including the cost of revising any ideas that stand in the way.

Spengler, whatever his forebodings may have seemed in the past, was standing as an Ezekiel before us:

> A sword, a sword is sharpened. . . .
> Should we then make mirth?
> This sword is sharpened, and it is furbished. . . .
> Thou, therefore, son of man,
> Prophesy. And smite thine hands together,
> And let the sword be doubled the third time.

It may well be that national defence, which is one of the oldest problems in history, is to be the only real problem in the years just ahead. Spengler thought so. For him domestic policy has no meaning, except as it gives a nation strength to deal with the world around. He cannot reiterate it too often: " A nation does not live alone in the world." It is a message that, heeded in time, might already have saved many beautiful things.

Many signs say that we may at last be ready to begin understanding the Spengler message. Spengler himself predicted as much: " We must look . . . to the new generation to do it."

Spengler was writing in an age when belief in the destined progress of " democracy," and faith in the omnipotence of each man's free will, still burned with religious fervour half around the globe. The man who dared to assert that both were already tottering to a fall seemed slightly mad and even anti-social.

But time seems to be giving Spengler the status of a prophet – perhaps the greatest of our age and culture.

His prophecies have been coming true according to advance schedule. There is only one test for a prophet – and this is it. It is also one test for a scientist.

All science has one ultimate business – to predict. Its object is to recognize, in its field of inquiry, an ordering and a relationship between phenomena which will finally enable it to say, $1 + 2 = 3$. That is, if you add 1 to 2 you will always get 3. Or, if not always, at least under stipulated conditions. These conditions it is the business of science to investigate and catalogue.

Now science began its inquiries with phenomena the very farthest from man – the stars; and it has only slowly worked its way down toward the subject of man's major interest, which is himself. And not always successfully. Psychology and sociology seem far from being true sciences even yet. When an obscure German school teacher suddenly appeared, and claimed to have evolved a science of history that permitted prediction in human affairs – this to many seemed almost monstrous, twenty odd years ago. At least, it was monstrous in the eyes of many another scientist who, whatever his fame, fortune, and degree, had never succeeded in making accurate predictions except in reference to atoms, stars, equations, and chemical formulæ.

It seemed the more intolerable because Spengler, in formulating what he called a Morphology of History, found it necessary to throw overboard some of the dearest prejudices of the science of his time. Thus he dispensed with Causality. He labelled it merely an intellectual view of the world. In those days Causality was still the *deus ex machina* in many a laboratory. Spengler talked in an unfamiliar language.

Since then, our Science has itself adopted some new ways of speech. Causality has indeed been recognized as a kind of illusion. Physics, in making its predictions, has come to realize that it often relies on laws of averages not vastly different from those used by life insurance companies to forecast next year's deaths. Mathematics had long worked in frames of reference where practically all causes lie in the observer – where practically anything can be true, if he can first imagine it. Even biology finally found itself drawing the very population charts which Spengler predicted would be drawn – and without being able to put a finger decisively on any causality in them.

A most remarkable book was published by Raymond Pearl in 1925 under the title, *The Biology of Population Growth*. Dr. Pearl, of Johns Hopkins, had discovered that there was a law of growth, which proceeded according to a peculiar curve. In charting the growth in weight of a white rat, for instance, one would find a slow rise in the beginning, then a rapid rise, then a gradual levelling out. The curve would have, roughly, the shape of a slanted S which was distorted by stretching out both ends.

Interestingly enough, a pumpkin's charted growth would show the same approximate curve. More interesting still, the growth of a population of yeast cells would also proceed according to this curve.

But most extraordinary of all, the growth of a human nation was found to follow the same sort of curve as that of a population of yeast cells.

Now it is somehow reasonable, and at least not difficult, to accept the idea that a culture of yeast cells would expand according to a definite law. Such a culture, in a controlled environment, and undisturbed by any force –

unless perhaps someone accidentally knocked it over, and spilled it on the laboratory floor – would naturally expand rapidly while ample room still existed to grow in. It would naturally cease expanding when it had exhausted the resources of its environment. It would naturally start on a decline when the impetus of expansion had finally been exhausted.

But what about a nation? A nation fights wars, goes through plagues, experiences birth-control movements and anti-birth-control movements. It has drouths and rains; periods of scarcity and plenty; and all its citizens are supposed to be exercising their free wills all of the time, including freedom to produce children or not.

Yet the various nations of the world, so far as we possess population records, can be shown generally to follow the same curve of growth that in essence governs the growth of a pumpkin or a culture of yeast cells. Furthermore, if you establish, by survey, a few points on such a curve, you can reconstruct past segments for which records are missing. *And you also can predict, with fair accuracy, the curve's future course.*

Dr. Pearl, as a respected scientist, devoted much of his book to a quest for the causal factors operating behind this law of growth. He noted that nations addicted to venery, like the Arabs, and nations addicted to disease, like some others, and nations addicted to a high level of intelligence and conduct, like the Swedes, all pursued the same curve in their national life. The incidence of wars, famines, "morals," and other phenomena – (Dr. Pearl even compiled tables of the incidence of sexual activity in a group of men) – all seemed to have no indubitable causal connection in the outcome. Like Brother Juniper, he ended

profoundly convinced that it was hardly an accident, but Design. Yet the ultimate secret of that design seemed to baffle him. It has baffled others.

Without in any way committing Dr. Pearl to the Spenglerian thesis, four of the charts illustrating the growth of individual organisms and peoples are reproduced here, with his permission, from *The Biology of Population Growth*. Exactly the same sort of graph is used today, by corporations and governments, to predict future population expansion, and resulting industrial needs, for modern cities, states, and nations. One such study, based on these principles, is the outstanding *Regional Survey of New York and its Environs*, which was originally published in 1929.

It was this same design, this same sort of curve, that Spengler thought he saw in the life of every Culture. The early part of the curve, when it was in its early rise, Spengler called the Springtime. Then came the full waxing, which Spengler variously called the Summer and Autumn periods, and the Early and Late Periods of Culture. Then, finally, came the last period, when the accomplishments of the Culture were frozen in rigidity; and this period Spengler called the Winter, or the time of "Civilization."

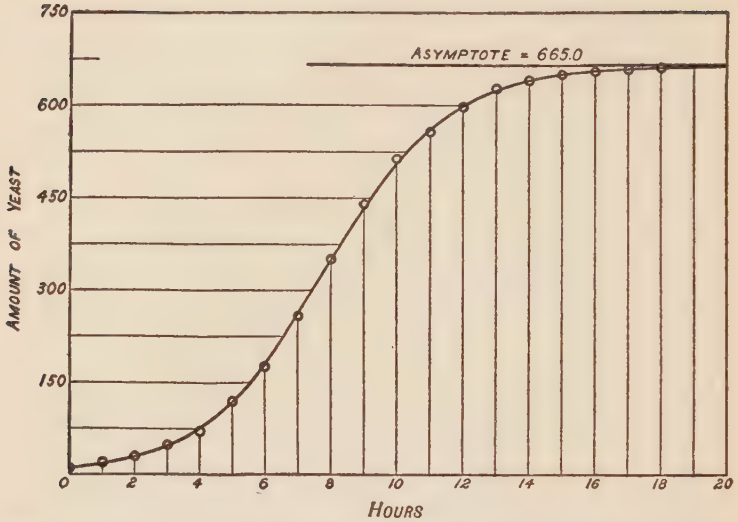
The curve for all Cultures seemed the same. *Furthermore, similar events seemed to occur in each Culture, at exactly corresponding points on the curve.* Thus, in the field of science and the arts, Spengler found that architecture reached the peak of its development always at the same point; so did mathematics; so did painting and music; so did the physical sciences. Again, in the field of politics and statecraft, similar developments seemed likewise to

show up at identical points. Thus town building appeared always to expand into city building at the same period in every Culture. Similarly, Feudal rule of the elite passed into democracy, then into mobocracy, then into Cæsarism, at the same points on all the cultural graphs that Spengler compiled.

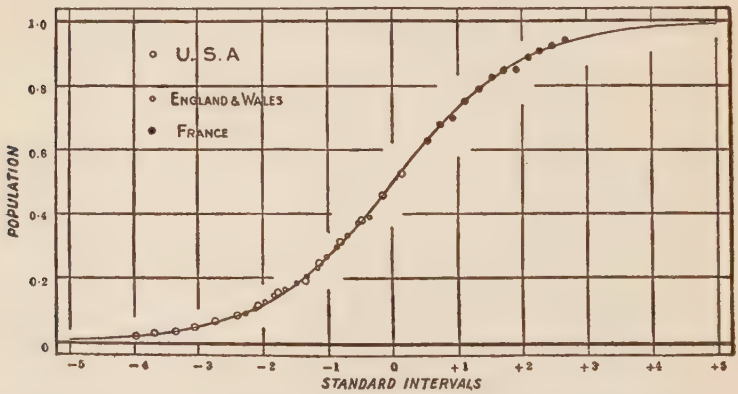
Most important, when several points had already been established, Spengler believed that the remaining part of the curve could be predicted, and so events still to come could be approximately timed. In the population charts of Dr. Pearl, the future course can be constructed with mathematical accuracy when the early points are known – just because this curve is the expression of a "mathematical" law. In much the same way, Spengler was convinced that the future course of a Culture could be accurately drawn, when the early dates in its history had once been established.

A familiar parallel to the Spengler conception may be found in the life of an individual. If such a life is charted by drawing a line, we may indicate points along this line where we know – from observing numerous other individuals – that certain events should occur. At a given age teeth will appear, the individual starts to walk, speech begins, social consciousness dawns, puberty develops. That is, we can make predictions regarding the advent of both physical and psychological developments. While variations will occur, due to the particular temperament of the individual organism, a study of this temperament even permits predictions as to variation. Again, just as the individual of each species has an average life span, so, thought Spengler, does each Culture, which shows a period of approximately a thousand years between its "spring" or

The General Pattern of the Curve



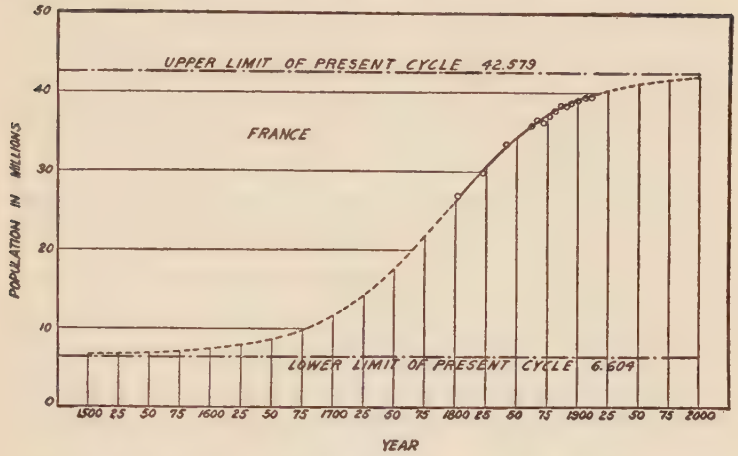
The growth of a population of yeast cells. Data from Carlson, represented by small circles. Smooth curve from Pearl's Equation IV.



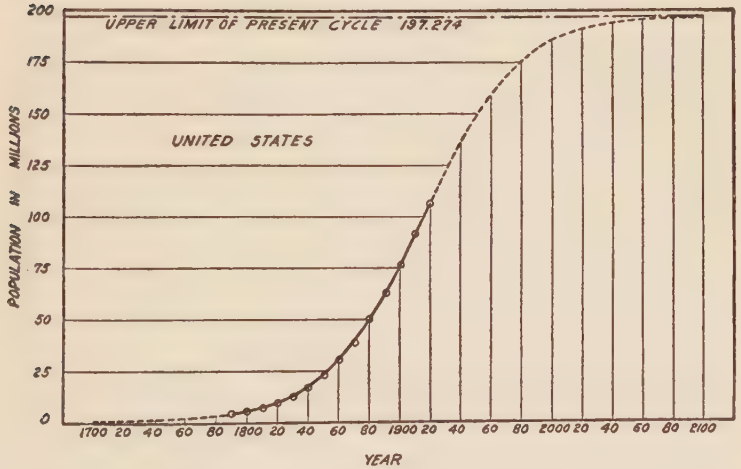
The growth of three Western peoples. The population of the United States (1790–1920), of England and Wales (1801–1921), and of France, including Alsace-Lorraine (1801–1911), fitted to the same logistic drawn to the standard time scale. (From Yule.)

CHARTS FROM *The Biology of Population Growth* BY RAYMOND PEARL.

Estimating Past and Future Points



The population growth of France, shown in the heavy part of the curve for which census data are available.



The population growth of the United States, which as an individual nation is shown by the curve to be in a much earlier period of growth than France.

CHARTS FROM *The Biology of Population Growth* BY RAYMOND PEARL.

dawning, and its final freezing in the ultimate forms of its Civilization period.

Such is the Spengler theory of historical development, and the basis of the Spengler predictions regarding the present era of our particular Culture.

Before and after a Culture, mankind is " historyless," in Spengler's view. That is, nothing of historical significance happens. But the moment a Culture is born, the curve of facts begins, and continues through consistently.

How and why the Culture should be born is a mystery he asserts we cannot explain – just as we cannot explain causally any organism that has life. The intellectual view, which is also the causal view, cannot wholly comprehend factors which are part of a vaster Reality.

Here Spengler has the mystic's conviction, which insists that the ruling laws of life are written in higher dimensions than the three dimensional categories which alone the intellect can understand. Some contemporary philosophers like our own Josiah Royce of Harvard might readily have found a basis of agreement. But that mysticism was alone enough, in 1918, to put between Spengler and most conventional scientists a seemingly impassable barrier.

Here again, however, we have come far in few years. Even as Spengler wrote, the physical sciences already were reaching beyond Causality, to find there a Universe that acted mysteriously like a mirror for man's own mind. This, of course, was what some philosophers had long been saying, and was exactly the way Spengler described Nature. Writers on physics like Eddington and Milliken, Whitehead and Jeans, bent their skill to making such a concept understandable in terms of the physical labora-

tory, for minds trained in less rarefied realms of scientific atmosphere. Meanwhile, also, the remarkable *Tertium Organum* of P. D. Ouspensky had reached English publication, almost simultaneously with Spengler. Slowly finding its audience, it offered a logical approach to mysticism – a logical understanding of the illogical; and put the whole subject within the (at least) partial grasp even of the non-scientific reader.

Thus denial of Causality as the determining factor in Life ceased gradually to seem heresy. With this it became possible for those trained in the conventions to read Spengler without raised eyebrows. Nor should any unfamiliar with mysticism come to Spengler with the idea that his own mysticism, at least, means the vague ways of an impractical dreamer. Spengler uses it for very practical purposes, designed to reduce to spluttering apoplexy many who are self-esteemed as the really hard-boiled realists of our day.

A Culture, in Spengler's view, has a life of its own, quite as unique and real as the life of any individual member of that Culture. In much the same way, the human being has a life higher than that of the individual cells of which his body is composed. Similarly, Spengler regards each Culture as guided in its unfolding by a Soul. Maeterlinck, studying his bees, thought of the Spirit of the Hive as a force that flowed through and united the life of every individual member of the bee community. Quite similarly, to Spengler the Soul of the Culture is a unique reality, that imbues and colours the activity of every human life in the Culture-stream.

It is of course obvious that as many concepts of history are possible as there are people to entertain them. Perhaps

the major claim made by Spengler in behalf of his own concept is the one that it permits of prediction. Now this claim, if verified, must prove vital. In what is called the scientific approach, the ability to predict accurately determines the ultimate value of the hypothesis. In the laboratory, many hypotheses must usually be examined before the workable one is found. The workable one is that which not only will include all known factors, but can be employed to predict outcomes. Thus the hypothesis we accept concerning the organization of the solar system is that which permits accurate forecasts concerning future events in that system; old hypotheses, which did not meet this test, have had to be discarded. This is a rigid test, common in the true sciences, and usually either avoided by such pseudo-sciences as economics, or else not met. That Spengler is willing to meet it, in his own field of thought, and indeed goes far to invite its application, must win him respectful attention, however far from prevailing concepts his views at times may seem.

It may be noted, in passing, that this same test may properly be applied to measure the value of any philosophy of men and events. Any concept — economic, political, or cultural — which leaves its possessor wholly unprepared for tomorrow is of doubtful validity. Conversely, men who are not surprised when the future comes live very close to the truth. These are truisms worth restatement in our times.

The wintertime of a Culture — its old age — is for Spengler the stage which he calls Civilization. It is the time

of great city developments. It is here that he sees Cæsarism inevitably developing.

Writing his great thesis during the course of the first World War, Spengler felt quite certain that that war would be only the first of many to come. For his charts showed our life in the awful age of "Contending States," when the dictators would arise. He was equally certain that Democracy would shortly give way under the Cæsars' march; the Cæsars destroyed both Democracy and Money. This was, of course, before Fascism had ever been heard of in our time. Cæsarism was the word which Spengler took from past history.

Here an explanation is warranted concerning the Spengler view as to the meaning of "*Decline*." The word as used in the English title is not a perfect translation. There is for *Decline* a perfectly good word in German, but Spengler did not use it for his German title. He wrote "*Untergang*" instead, which means a *Sinking* or a *Going Under*, as of the sun at the final moment of sunset. Yet the German title no more portrays Spengler's real meaning than does the English one. Spengler in a later day sought to clear up some of the confusion by writing a pamphlet on *Pessimism*, in which he insisted his outlook was not the dark one some assumed. "There are people," he wrote, "who confuse the sinking of a civilization with the sinking of an ocean liner. The word does not connote catastrophe. If *Completion* be substituted for *Sinking* – and the word has this special sense in Goethe – then the 'pessimistic' element is eliminated for the time being, without any alteration in the fundamental sense of the idea." He spoke of pre-war times, during which his book

was conceived, while "the stale optimism of the Darwinian age lay like a pall over the European-American scene"; and he said:

"Out of an inner contradiction I unconsciously put my finger on that element which nobody wanted to consider, by means of the title of my book. Had I to choose today, I should try to hit off the equally stale pessimism by means of another formula."

Convinced that the eras of great creative work in the arts and sciences were finished for our Culture, Spengler did view the completion of Civilization as a period of decline from great creative heights. It would finally become a period when styles would be eternally reborn; but all of them would be without creative life. It would end as a period which might be extended in life indefinitely and for millennia – as that, say, of the old Chinese, or the Hindus, or the Egyptian Fellahs. But historically it would cease to be eventful.

Millions might live happily and joyfully after the Cæsars had finally settled their battles, and the great age of complacent empire was at last established. But for Spengler, at least, all this would be as night after the glowing noonday of our Culture's magnificent creative work, in times when the imagination of its men soared to infinity, and conquered unknown dimensions not only of the earth, but of the Universe.

This view does involve a subjective judgment – firmly as Spengler strove to take a viewpoint outside of our own peculiar Cultural history. Even he would admit that millions were extremely happy and satisfied in the "Winter" years of the great Roman peace that followed Augustus. Bathed in the frozen splendour of such cities as had never

been seen before, they would not have traded their "declining" life for all the adventures, achievements, and spiritual experience of the earlier days when Rome was on her climb to the final epoch. Indeed, as Roland G. Usher once remarked, Rome had "fallen" 400 years before the happy Romans ever knew of the fall.

It would doubtless be the same in any coming age, if our own wars of decimation are at last ended, and Spengler's vision of a frozen sort of final Civilization were established in our world. Millions who even now hardly know the difference between a Titian and a Rembrandt would gladly trade our present for that future which Spengler foresees some two centuries hence. With an eye to that future, it is possible to say that *The Decline of the West* could as well be called *On Our Way to World Empire and Peace.*

Thus some of the despair in Spengler's voice may be partly discounted, at least for present purposes and present attitudes. The average American, by nature born to regard optimism as a duty – and by accident put in a country where "free will" could roam so untrammelled that it seemed the sole determinant of American events – can still read Spengler to enormous advantage. If Spengler tells some hard truths about our world, events themselves are bringing some of those truths home to us with a suddenness that has found us quite unarmed to meet them – physically and spiritually.

Many know Spengler by hearsay; it is doubtful if any but the most literate have ever ploughed through his more than half a million words. For Spengler in the original is

not easy reading. It is to be hoped that those who here approach him for the first time can do so with as open a mind as possible, while laying aside as many preconceived ideas as possible, both about Spengler and our society. The reward will be the greater, and the shock to the sensibilities the less.

Thurman Arnold, in *The Folklore of Capitalism*, spoke of making an effort to get outside the frame of the phenomenon he was describing, the more realistically to see it. Ouspensky, whose *Tertium Organum* greatly influenced Arnold's approach to the American scene, offers valuable training in developing such a view; and to read his work in connection with Spengler can often be equally helpful. At any rate, it must be remembered by the reader that Spengler is seeking to take a view of history as it would seem — not to an American or Frenchman or German buried in the controversies of today — but as it should appear to a Being who could see the whole life of our Culture at one glance.

It may further be remembered that unlike Marx, Spengler did little proselyting for his ideas; he founded no school; he went in for neither pamphleteering nor organizations. He said, in effect, " Here are my findings. The facts of today are thus. The facts of tomorrow are thus. Believe me or not, as you wish, I rely on events to confirm me." Convinced of his thesis, Spengler seldom tried to wrap it in insinuating prose, or words designed to lead a reader unsuspectingly into agreement. It is true that some of his pages rise to the heights of sheer poetry — he indeed declares that history and poetry are close kin. But other Spengler pages can be as shocking as a sudden bombfall to those who come to him with some of the preconceived

notions of life and history complacently taught in the public schools.

To have suggested, even ten years ago, that those notions be at least temporarily laid aside while approaching Spengler, would have seemed to many American readers almost heresy. Today that possibility seems neither so remote, nor quite impractical, for any reader who has followed the radio announcers. And the reward for making the effort is there.

We live in an age, as Spengler points out, when mathematical equations that can be worked only by a few of the really learned determine the ways of life for millions. Quite similarly, there are seminal books and ideas, understood fully by relatively few, which affect whole nations.

Thus a book like *Tertium Organum*, unheard of by the general public, enters into the life of all America because a young lawyer came under its influence, was appointed Attorney General, and used its technique to enforce the anti-Trust laws with some surprising results – Thurman Arnold even brought to the bar some organizations never gotten there before, including labour unions, the A.M.A., and a part of the building industry. *The Folklore of Capitalism* stems straight from Ouspensky's views on reality, in insisting that logic is to be used in politics merely to satisfy the mind and never to guide action – thus freeing men's energies to do the illogical, which is the humanly necessary. The manner in which Arnold put such axioms to work in Washington left a number of attorneys, trained to think in older frames of reference, with small recourse but to sign consent decrees.

Quite similarly, a book like *The Decline of the West*, which seems far from the realities of life for the many, puts in coherent form some of the basic concepts that are now at work revolutionizing our world. One need not refer to events abroad to see the point – there are enough at home. Thus critics of Roosevelt II, indignant because of his lack of logic and consistency, might not have taken their own complaints so seriously had they known Spengler's recipe for successful statesmanship; they might rather have tried the same technique. Nor, would those aware with Spengler of the cyclic appeal of slogans, and their short historic life in affecting the vote, have assumed that such Roosevelt measures as the public utility legislation could be defeated by again exhorting the crowd to "freedom and liberty." Conversely, many of the men who do show a record of success in our generation's conflicts are following out many of the Spengler axioms, whether wittingly or no.

Such aggregations of ideas, however obscure they appear, often seep into our life by channels most men are never aware of. They will not, for this very reason, be overlooked by those who intend – as Spengler would say – to live as the *subjects* of events, and not as mere objects in history.

With the exception of the new chapter headings that have been supplied, the text as presented here contains only Spengler's own words. It is, of course, greatly abridged. *The Decline of the West* runs to more than a thousand pages, of which some one hundred and fifty have been included here.

These excerpts are meant not to serve wholly as a substitute for the original work, but rather to direct the reader there. If one has once grasped the Spengler theme, it is possible to dip into the vast work almost anywhere, and come up richly rewarded. The difficulty until now has been that a complete reading was first required before the full scheme of the presentation could be grasped. These excerpts, which do present the scheme in outline, may help solve this difficulty, so that readers can thereafter take the great original piecemeal, as opportunity offers.

Spengler was himself so widely read that none of the "specialists" of his time was equipped for more than criticizing some brief and single part of his work – which takes in the history not merely of all the sciences and the arts, but of philosophy, politics, history, religion, language and some of the most abstruse categories of our Culture's thinking.

The present group of excerpts are balanced heavily on the side of economics and politics; for ours is a highly political age. Already, in a few years, we have come far from the time when psychology was a problem of wide interest; with the thirties we moved deep into public obsessions for economics; and today in the forties economics is already giving way to a passion for grasping the political realities.

Spengler himself would have understood this fully; and he would perhaps wholly approve an attempt to take from his great compendium some parts which throw into highlight the pressing problems of our day – those problems in high politics and international relationships which will be, said Spengler, the only sort which our age will be immediately concerned with, for a while.

Spengler, because of his great fund of fact and information, could hardly write a paragraph without including references to events over all his charts of history. For the scholar this is doubtless required reading. Here, in these excerpts, the reader will find rather what might be called a " news " treatment. Many parts of Spengler are indeed closely related to the very news that is appearing, and may shortly appear, in our newspapers. There are passages so apposite to the present that the reader needs to remind himself they were written almost a quarter century ago.

Some of this material on economics and politics has been assembled in Part I of this abridgment, before the statement of the thesis in Part II. There are reasons that would justify reversing such an order. But today, in learning French, it is approved practice to start speaking it before being introduced to the theory of the language. That principle seems applicable to Spengler. Thus in the initial chapters here the reader will immediately find himself dealing with concrete ideas. If he prefers to do this only after obtaining a full view of the underlying theory, he may begin with Part II instead, and then retrace his steps.

Not only have the elisions been enormous. No hesitancy has been felt in assembling related paragraphs that in the original might stand hundreds of pages apart; nor in omitting observations parenthetical to the thesis; nor in cutting long sentences in two and three and more parts, by inserting subjects anew and altering punctuation. Spengler's footnotes, when used, have usually been worked into the text. It is hoped that the result – readability for a wider audience – will justify the method. Even twenty years ago, the rhythm of life was slower, and more time was available for study and attentive reading. Today for

every man, the more important he is in the life of the nation, the less is personal time often available for studying and ordering facts.

It should be added that no editor, in making an abridgment, is justified in omitting material because he personally may disagree with it. His selections must at least be representative of the whole. But by this very token his own judgments as to facts and interpretations are not necessarily expressed in his judgments concerning the relative importance of the material chosen.

The original authorized translation into English by Charles Francis Atkinson was a great labour of love, with no adequate reward possible but the knowledge of such a herculean labour done. These excerpts are derived from that translation, which must be regarded as the standard for the English language.

In his original work, Spengler inserted three charts intended to visualize for the reader his concept of the Seasons or Ages in the life of a Culture. One is reproduced here – the chart in which he tries to show how, in the life of all Cultures, political and social events of the same kind tend to appear at the same point. Such events he calls " contemporaneous." They occur, that is, at the same time in the various Cultures.

On the Spengler chart, which is in the form of a summary, showing the progress of Cultures as organisms, I have ventured to superimpose the sort of graph of growth which appears in the population studies of Dr. Pearl. It will be understood, of course, that this is only suggestive, and primarily intended to help the reader vis-

ualize one kind of information in terms at least related to facts of a more familiar kind.

Spengler dated this chart in round numbers of years — for the most part by centuries. Thus the era of "Cæsarism" in our own Culture is indicated on his graph for the two Centuries 2000–2200 A.D. But Spengler, were he alive in 1940, would now perhaps recognize in Hitler the first of his Faustian Cæsars, under whom he foresaw the world trembling, the money collapsing, and the blood streaming, as a prelude to the eventual birth of the Imperial Age and its Peace.

E. F. D.

VITAL EXCERPTS FROM
THE DECLINE OF THE WEST

A Destiny has placed us in this Culture and at this moment of its development – the moment when money is celebrating its last victories, and the Cæsarism that is to succeed approaches with quiet, firm step. Our direction, willed and obligatory at once, is set for us within narrow limits, and on any other terms life is not worth the living. We have not the freedom to reach to this or to that, but the freedom to do the necessary or to do nothing. And a task that historic necessity has set *will* be accomplished – with the individual, or against him.

Ducunt Fata volentem, nolentem trahunt.

PART I

POLITICS *VERSUS* ECONOMICS

WE SHALL DESIGNATE the soul of the Classical Culture, which chose the sensuously-present individual body as the ideal type of the extended, by the name (familiarized by Nietzsche) of the *Apollinian.*

In opposition to it we have the *Faustian* soul, whose prime-symbol is pure and limitless space. Its "body" is the Western Culture that blossomed forth with the birth of the Romanesque style in the 10th century in the Northern plain between the Elbe and the Tagus. The Faust of the First Part of the tragedy, the passionate student of solitary midnights, is logically the progenitor of the Faust of the Second Part and of the new century – the symbol of a purely practical, far-seeing, outward-directed activity. In him Goethe presaged, psychologically, the whole future of West Europe. He is Civilization in the place of Culture; external mechanism in place of internal organism; intellect as the petrifact of extinct soul.

In the time of Augustus, there appears – aloof but able to speak to us through forms borrowed, adopted and inherited – the *Magian* soul of the Arabian Culture, with its algebra, astrology and alchemy; its mosaics and arabesques; its caliphates and mosques; and the sacraments and scriptures of the Persian, Jewish, Christian, "post-Classical" and Manichæan religions.

In reality, every Culture possesses its own systematic psychology, just as it possesses its own style of knowledge of men and experience of life.

Directional energy is denied in the *Classical* and also in the *Indian* soul-image, where all is settled and rounded. It is emphatically affirmed in the *Faustian* and in the *Egyptian*, wherein all is systems and centres of forces. And yet – precisely because this affirmation involves the element of time – thought, which is alien to Time, finds itself committed to self-contradictions. . . . This is the discrepancy that underlies the conflict concerning the primacy of will or reason, the *basic problem of the Gothic philosophy.*

CHAPTER I

WHAT STATESMEN MUST KNOW

> "*A people is not alone in the world; and its future will be decided by its force-relationships toward other peoples and powers, and not by its mere internal ordering.*"

THE GREAT statesmen are accustomed to act immediately and on the basis of a sure flair for facts. This is so self-evident, to them, that it simply never enters their heads to reflect upon the basic general principles of their action — supposing indeed that such exist. In all ages they have known what they had to do; and any theory of this knowledge has been foreign to both their capacities and their tastes.

The professional thinkers who have turned their attention to the *faits accomplis* of men have been so remote, inwardly, from these actions that they have just spun for themselves a web of abstractions — abstraction-myths like justice, virtue, freedom. They then applied these as criteria to past and, especially, future historical happenings. They have forgotten that concepts are only concepts, and

brought themselves to the conclusion that there is a political science whereby we can form the course of the world according to an ideal recipe. As nothing of the kind has ever or anywhere happened, political doing has come to be considered as so trivial in comparison with abstract thinking that they debate in their books whether there is a " genius of action " at all.

Here the attempt will be made to give, instead of an ideological system, a *physiognomy* of politics as it has actually been practised in the course of general history, and not as it might or ought to have been practised. The projects of world-improvers and the actuality of History have nothing to do with one another.

The being-streams of humanity are called History when we regard them as movement; and family, estate, people, nation, when we regard them as the object moved. Politics is the way in which this fluent Being maintains itself, *grows*, triumphs over other life-streams. *All living is politics*, in every trait of instinct, in the inmost marrow.

The nobility, as expression of a strong race-quality, is the truly political Order. Every great politician, a centre of forces in the stream of happening, has something of the noble in his feeling of self-vocation and inward obligation.

A people *is*, really, only in relation to peoples. But the natural, " race " relation between them is for that very reason a relation of war – this is a fact that no truths avail to alter. War is the primary politics of *everything* that lives, and so much so that in the deeps battle and life are one, and being and will-to-battle expire together.

Even though all high politics tries to be a substitution of more intellectual weapons for the sword, and though it is the ambition of the statesman at the culminations of all the

Cultures to feel able to dispense with war, yet the primary relationship between diplomacy and the war-art endures. The character of battle is common to both: the tactics and stratagems, and the necessity of material forces in the background to give weight to the operations. The aim, too, remains the same – namely, the growth of one's own life-unit (class or nation) at the cost of the other's. Every attempt to eliminate the " race " element only leads to its transfer to other ground. Instead of the conflict of states we have that of parties; or that of areas; or (if there also the will to growth is extinct) that of the adventurers' retinues, to whose doings the rest of the population unresistingly adjusts itself.

In every war between life-powers the question at issue is which is to govern the whole. It is always a life – never a system, law, or program – that gives the beat in the stream of happening.

There is only *personal* history, and consequently only *personal* politics. The struggle is not of principles but men, not of ideals but race-qualities. Even revolutions are no exception. For the " sovereignty of the people " only expresses the fact that the ruling power has assumed the title of people's leader instead of that of king. The method of governing is scarcely altered thereby, and the position of the governed not at all. Even world-peace, in every case where it has existed, has been nothing but the slavery of an entire humanity under the regimen imposed by a few strong natures determined to rule.

The life-unit – even in the case of the animals – is subdivided into subjects and objects of government. This is so self-evident that no mass-unit has ever for a moment, even in the severest crises (such as 1789), lost the sense of this

inner structure of itself. Only the incumbent vanishes, not the office. And if a people does actually, in the tide of events, lose all leadership and float on haphazard, it only means that control has passed to outside hands, that it has become *in its entirety* the mere object.

Politically gifted *peoples* do not exist. Those which are supposed to be so are simply peoples that are firmly in the hands of a ruling minority, and in consequence feel themselves to be in good form. The English as a people are just as unthinking, narrow, and unpractical in political matters as any other nation. But they possess — for all their liking for public debate — a *tradition of confidence*. The Englishman is the object of a regimen of very old and successful habits, in which he acquiesces because experience has shown him their advantage. From an acquiescence that has the outward appearance of agreement, it is only one step to the conviction that this government depends upon his will — although paradoxically it is the government that, for technical reasons of its own, unceasingly hammers the notion into his head.

The ruling class in England has developed its aims and methods quite independently of the "people." It works with and within an unwritten constitution of which the refinements — which have arisen from practice and are wholly innocent of theory — are to the uninitiated as opaque as they are unintelligible. But the courage of a troop depends on its confidence in the leadership. And confidence means involuntary abstention from criticism. It is the officer who makes cowards into heroes, or heroes into cowards, and this holds good equally for armies, peoples, classes, and parties. *Political talent in a people* is nothing but confidence in its leading.

But that confidence has to be acquired; it will ripen only in its own good time, and success will stabilize it and make it into a tradition. What appears as a lack of the feeling of certainty in the ruled is really lack of leadership-talent in the ruling classes. This generates that sort of uninstinctive and meddlesome criticism which by its very existence shows that a people has got " out of condition."

How is politics *done*? The born statesman is above all a valuer — a valuer of men, situations, and things. He has the " eye " which unhesitatingly and inflexibly embraces the round of possibilities, as the judge of horses takes in an animal with one glance and knows what prospects it will have in a race. To do the correct thing without " knowing " it, to have the hands that imperceptibly tighten or ease the bit — this talent is the very opposite to that of the man of theory.

There are born destiny-men and causality-men. A whole world separates them. The purely living man is peasant and warrior, statesman and general, man of the world and man of business, everyone who wills to prosper, to rule, to fight, and to dare, the organizer or entrepreneur, the adventurer or bravo or gambler. Opposed is the man who is destined either by the power of his mind or the defect of his blood to be an " intellectual " — the saint, priest, savant, idealist, or ideologue.

Even the footfall of the fact-man sounds different from, sounds more planted than, that of the thinker, in whom the pure microcosmic can acquire no firm relation with earth.

Destiny has made the man so or so — subtle and fact-

shy, or active and contemptuous of thought. The man of the active category is a whole man. Whereas in the contemplative man a single organ can operate without (and even against) the body. All the worse, then, when this organ tries to master actuality as well as its own world. For then we get all those ethico-politico-social reform-projects which demonstrate, unanswerably, how things ought to be and how to set about making them so — theories that, without exception, rest upon the hypothesis that all men are as rich in ideas and as poor in motives as the author is (or thinks he is). Such theories, even when they have taken the field armed with the full authority of a religion or the prestige of a famous name, have not in one single instance effected the slightest alteration in life. They have merely caused us to *think* otherwise than before about life.

And this, precisely, is the doom of the " late " ages of a Culture, the ages of much writing and much reading. They perpetually confuse the opposition of life and thought with the opposition between thought-about-life and thought-about-thought. All world-improvers, priests, and philosophers are unanimous in holding that life is a fit object for the nicest meditation; but the life of the world goes its own way and cares not in the least what is said about it. And even when a community succeeds in living " according to rule," all that it achieves is, at best, a note on itself in some future history of the world — if there is space left after the proper and only important subject-matter has been dealt with.

For, in the last resort, only the active man, the man of destiny, lives in the *actual* world, the world of political, military, and economic decisions — in which concepts and

systems do not figure or count. Here a shrewd blow is more than a shrewd conclusion. And there is sense in the contempt with which statesmen and soldiers of all times have regarded the "ink-slinger" and the "bookworm," who think that world-history exists for the sake of the intellect or science or even art.

Men of theory commit a huge mistake in believing that their place is at the head and not in the train of great events. They misunderstand completely the rôle played, for example, by the political Sophists in Athens, or by Voltaire and Rousseau in France. Often enough a statesman does not "know" what he is doing, but that does not prevent him from following with confidence just the one path that leads to success. The political doctrinaire, on the contrary, always knows what should be done, and yet his activity, once it ceases to be limited to paper, is the least successful and therefore the least valuable in history. These intrusions happen only too frequently in times of uncertainty, like that of the Attic enlightenment, or the French or the German revolutions, when the ideologue of word or pen is eager to be busy with the actual history of the people instead of with systems. He mistakes his place. He belongs with his principles and programs to no history but the history of a literature. Real history passes judgment on him not by controverting the theorist, but by leaving him and all his thoughts to himself.

A Plato or a Rousseau – not to mention the smaller intellects – could build up abstract political structures, but for Alexander, Scipio, Cæsar, and Napoleon, with their schemes and battles and settlements, they were entirely without importance. The thinker could discuss destiny if he liked; it was enough for these men to *be* destiny.

The fact-man is immune from the risk of practising sentimental or program politics. He does not believe in the big words. Pilate's question is constantly on his lips — *truths?* The born statesman stands beyond true and false. He does not confuse the logic of events with the logic of systems. " Truths " or " errors " — which here amount to the same — only concern him as intellectual currents, and in respect of *workings*. He surveys their potency, durability, and direction, and duly books them in his calculations for the destiny of the power that he directs.

He has convictions, certainly, that are dear to him. But he has them as a private person; no real politician ever felt himself tied to them when in action. " The doer is always conscienceless; no one has a conscience except the spectator," said Goethe. It is equally true of Sulla and Robespierre as it is of Bismarck and Pitt.

The great Popes and the English party-leaders, so long as they had still to strive for the mastery of things, acted on the same principles as the conquerors and upstarts of all ages. Take the dealings of Innocent III, who very nearly succeeded in creating a world-dominion of the Church, and deduce therefrom the catechism of success; it will be found to be in the extremest contradiction with all re-religious moral. Yet without it there could have been no bearable existence for any Church, not to mention English Colonies, American fortunes, victorious revolutions, or, for that matter, states or parties or peoples in general. It is *life*, not the individual, that is conscienceless.

The essential, therefore, is to understand the time *for* which one is born. He who does not sense and understand its most secret forces — who does not feel in himself something cognate that drives him forward on a path neither

hedged nor defined by concepts — who believes in the surface, public opinion, large phrases and ideals of the day — he is not of the stature for its events. He is in their power, not they in his.

Look not back to the past for measuring-rods. Still less sideways for some system or other! There are times, like our own present and the Gracchan age, in which there are two most deadly kinds of idealism, the reactionary and the democratic. The one believes in the reversibility of history, the other in a teleology of history. It makes no difference, to the inevitable failure with which both burden a nation over whose destiny they have power, whether it is to a memory or to a concept that they sacrifice it.

The genuine statesman is incarnate history, its directedness expressed as individual will and its organic logic as character. The true statesman must also be, in a large sense of the word, an educator — not the representative of a moral or a doctrine, but an exemplar in doing.

It is a patent fact that a religion has never yet altered the style of an existence. It penetrated the waking-consciousness, the *intellectual* man; it threw new light on another world; it created an immense happiness by way of humanity, resignation, and patience unto death. But over the forces of life it possessed no power. In the sphere of the living only the great personality — the "it," the race, the cosmic force bound up in that personality — has been creative. Only this has effectively modified the type of entire classes and peoples.

It is not "the" truth or "the" good or "the" upright; but "the" Roman or "the" Puritan or "the" Prussian, that is a fact. The sum of honour and duty, discipline, resolution, is a thing not learned from books, but *awak-*

ened in the stream of being by a living exemplar. That is why Frederick William I was one of those educators, great for all time, whose personal race-forming conduct does not vanish in the course of the generations.

The genuine statesman is distinguished from the " mere politician " — the player who plays for the pleasure of the game, the *arriviste* on the heights of history, the seeker after wealth and rank — as also from the schoolmaster of an ideal, by one fact: He dares to demand sacrifices — *and* obtains them, because his feeling that he is necessary to the time and the nation is shared by thousands; transforms them to the core; and renders them capable of deeds to which otherwise they could never have risen.

Highest of all, is not action, but the *ability to command*. It is this that takes the individual up out of himself and makes him the centre of a world of action.

There is one kind of commanding that makes obedience a proud, free, and noble habit. That kind Napoleon, for example, did *not* possess. A residue of subaltern outlook in him prevented him from training men to be men and not bureau-personnel, and led him to govern through edicts instead of through personalities. As he did not understand this subtlest act of command, and therefore was obliged to do everything really decisive himself, he slowly collapsed from inability to reconcile the demands of his position with the limit of human capabilities.

But one who, like Cæsar or Frederick the Great, possesses this last and highest gift of complete humanity, feels — on a battle-evening when operations are sweeping to the willed conclusion, and the victory is turning out to be conclusive of the campaign; or when the last

signature is written that rounds off a historical epoch – a wondrous sense of power that the man of truths can never know. There are moments – and they indicate the maxima of cosmic flowings – when the individual feels himself to be identical with Destiny, the centre of the world. And his own personality seems to him almost as a covering in which the history of the future is about to clothe itself.

The first problem is to make oneself somebody. The second – less obvious, but harder and greater in its ultimate effects – is *to create a tradition;* to bring on others so that one's work may be continued with one's own pulse and spirit; to release a current of like activity that does not need the original leader to maintain it in form.

And here the statesman rises to something that in the Classical world would doubtless have been called divinity. He becomes the creator of a new life, the *spirit*-ancestor of a young race. He himself, as a unit, vanishes from the stream after a few years. But a minority called into being by him takes up his course and maintains it indefinitely. This cosmic something, this soul of a ruling stratum, an individual *can* generate and leave as a heritage, and throughout history it is this that has produced the durable effects.

The great statesman is rare. Whether he comes, or wins through, too soon or too late, incident determines. Great individuals often destroy more than they have built up – by the gap that their death makes in the flow of happening. But *the creation of tradition means the elimination of the incident.*

A tradition breeds a high average, with which the future can reckon – no Cæsar, but a Senate; no Napoleon, but an incomparable officer-corps. A strong tradition attracts talents from all quarters, and out of small gifts produces

great results. The schools of painting of Italy and Holland are proof of this, no less than the Prussian army and the diplomacy of the Roman Curia.

It was the great flaw in Bismarck, as compared with Frederick William I, that he could achieve, but could not form, a tradition. He did not parallel Moltke's officer-corps by a corresponding race of politicians who would identify themselves in feeling with his State and its new tasks; who would constantly take up good men from below, and so provide for the continuance of the Bismarckian action-pulse for ever.

If this creation of a tradition does not come off, then instead of a homogeneous ruling stratum we have a congeries of heads that are helpless when confronted by the unforeseen. If it does, we have a *Sovereign People* in the one sense of the phrase worthy of a people and possible in the world of fact — a highly trained, self-replenishing minority with sure and slowly ripened traditions; a minority which attracts every talent into the charmed circle and uses it to the full, and *ipso facto* keeps itself in harmony with the remainder of the nation that it rules.

Such a minority slowly develops into a true "breed," even when it had begun merely as a party. And the sureness of its decisions comes to be that of blood, not of reason. This means that what happens in it happens "of itself" and does not need the Genius. *Great politics*, so to put it, *takes the place of the great politician.*

What, then, *is* politics? It is the art of the possible — an old saying, and almost an all-inclusive saying. The gardener can obtain a plant from the seed, or he can improve its stock. He can bring to bloom, or let languish, the dis-

positions hidden in it, its growths and colour, its flower and fruit. On his eye for possibilities – and, therefore, necessities – depends its fulfilment, its strength, its whole Destiny. But the basic form and direction of its being, the stages and tempo and direction thereof, are *not* in his power. It must accomplish them or it decays.

The same is true of the immense plant that we call a "Culture," and the being-streams of human families that are bound up in its form-world. The great statesman is the gardener of a people.

Every doer is born in a time and for a time, and thereby the ambit of *his* attainable achievement is fixed. For his grandfather, for his grandson, the data, and therefore the task and the object, are not the same. The circle is further narrowed by the limits of his personality, the properties of his people, the situation, and the men with whom he has to work. It is the hall-mark of the high politician that he is rarely caught out in a misappreciation of this limit, and equally rarely overlooks anything realizable within it.

With this goes a sure discrimination between what "ought" to be and what *will* be. The basic forms of the state and of political life, the direction and the degree of their evolution, are given values unalterably dependent on the given time. They are the track of political success, and not its goal.

The worshippers of political ideals create out of nothing. Their intellectual freedom is astounding, but their castles of the mind, built of airy concepts like wisdom and righteousness, liberty and equality, are in the end all the same; they are built from the top storey downwards. The master of fact, for his part, is content to direct imperceptibly

that which he sees and accepts as plain reality. This does not seem very much, yet it is the very starting-point of freedom, in a grand sense of the word.

The art of the statesman consists not only in a clear idea of the main lines drawn undeviably before him, *but also* in the sure handling of the single occurrences and the single persons, encountered along those lines, which can turn an impending disaster into a decisive success. An adept in the game can, like Talleyrand, go to Vienna as ambassador of the vanquished party and make himself master of the victor. At the Lucca meeting, Cæsar, whose position was wellnigh desperate, not only made Pompey's power serviceable to his own ends, but undermined it at the same time, and without his opponent's becoming aware of the fact.

A revolution that reaches explosion-point is always a proof of lack of the political pulse in the governors *and* in their opponents. The necessary must be done *opportunely* – namely, while it is a present wherewith the governing power can buy confidence in itself. If it has to be conceded as a sacrifice, it discloses a weakness and excites contempt. Political forms are living forms whose changes inexorably follow a definite direction. To attempt to prevent this course or to divert it towards some ideal is to confess oneself "out of condition." The Roman nobility possessed this congruence of pulse, the Spartan did not. In the period of mounting democracy we find again and again (as in France before 1789 and Germany before 1918) the arrival of a fatal moment when it is too late for the necessary reform to be given as a free gift. *Then* that which should be refused with the sternest energy is given as a *sacrifice*, and so becomes the sign of dissolution. But

those who fail to detect the first necessity in good time will all the more certainly fail to misunderstand the second situation. Even a journey to Canossa can be made too soon or too late – the timing may settle the future of whole peoples, whether they shall be Destiny for others, or themselves the objects of another's Destiny.

The declining democracy also repeats the same error of trying to hold what was the ideal of yesterday. This is the danger of our twentieth century. On the path towards Cæsarism there is ever a Cato to be found.

The influence that a statesman – even one in an exceptionally strong position – possesses over the *methods* of politics is very small, and it is one of the characteristics of the high-grade statesman that he does not deceive himself on this matter. His task is to work in and with the historical form that he finds in existence. It is only the theorist who enthusiastically searches for more ideal forms.

But to be politically "in form" means necessarily, amongst other things, an unconditional *command of the most modern means*. There is no choice about it. The means and methods are premises pertaining to the time and belong to the inner form of the time. One who grasps at the inapposite, who permits his taste or his feelings to overpower the pulse in him, loses at once his grip of realities.

The danger of an aristocracy is that of being conservative in its means; the danger of a democracy is the confusion of formula and form. The means of the present are, and will be for many years, parliamentary – elections and the press. He may think what he pleases about them, he may respect them or despise them, but he *must command them* – as Bach and Mozart commanded the musical means

of their times. This is the hall-mark of mastery in any and every field. And statecraft is no exception.

Now, the publicly visible outer form thereof is not the essential but merely the disguise. It may be altered, rationalized, and brought down to constitutional texts – without its actualities being necessarily affected in the slightest. The ambitions of all revolutionaries expend themselves in playing the game of rights, principles, and franchises on the surface of history. But the statesman knows that the extension of a franchise is quite unimportant in comparison with the technique – Athenian or Roman, Jacobin or American or German – of *operating* the votes. How the English constitution reads is a matter of small import, compared with the fact that it is managed by a small stratum of high families – so that an Edward VII is simply a minister of his Ministry. As for the modern Press, the sentimentalist may beam with contentment when it is constitutionally " free " – but the realist merely asks at whose disposal it is.

Politics, lastly, is the form in which is accomplished the history of a nation within a plurality of nations.

The great art is to maintain one's own nation inwardly " in form " for events outside. This is the natural relation of home and foreign politics – holding not only for Peoples and States and Estates, but for living units of every kind, down to the simplest animal swarms and into the individual bodies. As between the two, *the first exists exclusively for the second, and not vice versa.* The true democrat is accustomed to treat home politics as an end in itself; the rank and file of diplomats think solely of foreign affairs; just because of this, the individual successes of either " cut no ice."

No doubt, the political master exhibits his powers most obviously in the tactics of home reform; in his economic and social activities; in his cleverness in maintaining the " rights and liberties " in tune with the tastes of the period and *at the same time* effective; and in the education of those feelings without which it is impossible for a people to be " in condition " – namely, trust, respect for the leadership, consciousness of power, contentment, and (when necessary) enthusiasm.

But the value of all this depends upon its relation to this basic fact of higher history – a people is not alone in the world, and its future will be decided by its force-relationships towards other peoples and powers and not by its mere internal ordering. And, since the ordinary man is not so long-sighted, it is the ruling minority that must possess this quality on behalf of the rest. Not unless there is such a minority does the statesman find the instrument wherewith he can carry his purposes into effect.

CHAPTER 2

HOW DEMOCRACY WORKS

> "*Whether these doctrines are 'true' or 'false' is a question without meaning for political history. But whether they are effective; for how long the belief that actuality can be ameliorated by a system of concepts is a real force* — that *politics must reckon with. That does matter.*"

In the early politics of all Cultures the governing powers are pre-established and unquestioned. The "problems" of the State are not yet awakened. The sovereignty, the primary orders, the entire early form-world, are God-given; and it is on them as premises, not about them as objects of dispute, that the organic minorities fight their battles. These minorities we call *Factions*.

The change sets in as soon as, with the great city, the Non-Estate,[1] the bourgeosie, takes over the leading rôle.

[1] Spengler generally disdains use of the Marxian terminology that Communists made fashionable in literary reference. Thus he avoids the use of the Marxian *proletariat*, and instead calls this group of floating city-dwellers the *Residue*. He also on occasion uses for it the Latin *Plebs*. Similarly, for Spengler the city-dwelling *bourgeoisie* is simply the *non-Estate*. The *Estate* corresponds to the nobility – in modern parlance, the landed gentry. E.F.D.

Now the political *form* becomes the object of conflict, the problem. The powers of intellect and money set themselves up against blood and tradition. In place of the organic we have the organized; *in place of the Estate, the Party*.

A party is not a growth of race, but an aggregate of heads, and therefore as superior to the old estates in intellect as it is poorer in instinct. It is the mortal enemy of naturally matured class-ordering, the mere existence of which is in contradiction with its essence.

Consequently, the notion of party is always bound up with the unreservedly negative, disruptive, and socially levelling notion of *equality*. Noble ideals are no longer recognized, but only vocational interests. It is the same with the freedom-idea, which is likewise a negative – freedom *from* something.

Parties are a purely urban phenomenon. With the emancipation of the city from the country, everywhere, Estate politics gives way to party politics – in Egypt at the end of the Middle Kingdom; in China with the Contending States; in Baghdad and Byzantium with the Abbassid period. In the capitals of the West parties form in the parliamentary style. In the city-states of the Classical they are forum-parties. And we recognize parties in the Mavali and the monks of Theodore of Studion.

But always it is the Non-Estate, the unit of protest against the essence of Estate, whose leading minority – "educated" and "well-to-do" – comes forward as a party with a program. This consists of aims that are not felt but defined, and of the rejection of everything that cannot be rationally grasped. *At bottom, therefore, there is only one party*, that of the bourgeoisie, the liberal;

and it is perfectly conscious of its position as such. It looks on itself as coextensive with "the people." Its opponents (above all, the genuine Estates) are enemies and traitors to "the people." And its opinions are the "voice of the people," which is inoculated by all the expedients of party-political nursing – oratory in the Forum, press in the West – until these opinions do fairly represent it.

The prime Estates are nobility and priesthood. The prime Party is that of money and mind, liberal and megalopolitan. Herein lies the profound justification, in *all* Cultures, of the ideas of Aristocracy and Democracy. Aristocracy despises the mind of the cities; Democracy despises the boor and hates the countryside.[2] It is the difference between Estate politics and party politics; class-consciousness and party inclination; race and intellect; growth and construction. Aristocracy in the complete Culture, and Democracy in the incipient cosmopolitan Civilization, stand opposed till both are submerged in Cæsarism. As surely as the nobility is *the* Estate, so surely the nobility fails to feel as a party, though it may organize itself as one.

The nobility has, in fact, no choice but to do so. All modern constitutions repudiate the Estates and are built on the Party as self-evidently the basic form of politics. The nineteenth century – corresponding to the third century B.C. – is the heyday of party politics. Its democratic character compels the formation of counter-parties. Formerly, as late even as the eighteenth century, the "Tiers"

[2] It is an important factor in the democracy of England and America that in the first the yeomanry had died out, and in the second has never existed. The "farmer" is spiritually a suburban, and in practice carries on his farming as an industry. Instead of villages, there are only fragments of megalopolis. O.S.

constituted itself in imitation of the nobility as an Estate. Now there arises the *defensive* figure of the Conservative party, copied from the Liberal, dominated completely by the latter's forms, bourgeois-ized without being bourgeois, and obliged to fight with rules and methods that liberalism has laid down.

It has the choice of handling these means better than its adversary or of perishing. But it is of the intimate structure of an Estate that it does not understand the situation, and challenges the form instead of the foe. It is thus involved in that use of extreme methods which we see dominating the inner politics of whole states in the early phases of every Civilization, and delivering them helpless into the hands of the enemy.

The compulsion that there is upon every party to be bourgeois, at any rate in appearance, turns to sheer caricature when below the bourgeoisie of education and possessions, the Residue also organizes itself as a party.

Marxism, for example, is in theory a negation of bourgeoisie; but as a party it is in attitude and leadership essentially middle-class. There is a continuous conflict between its will — which can in honesty only be called civil war — and the appearances which it feels obliged to keep up. For Marxism these appearances are indispensable, at this particular period, if durable success is to be attained.

A noble party in a parliament is inwardly just as spurious as a proletarian. Only the bourgeoisie is in its natural place there.

In Rome, from the introduction of the Tribunes, in 471, to the recognition of their legislative omnipotence, in the revolution of 287, patricians and plebeians had fought their fight essentially as Estates, classes. But thereafter these

opposite terms possessed hardly more than genealogical significance. There developed parties instead, to which the terms liberal and conservative respectively may quite reasonably be applied – namely, the Populus, supreme in the forum, and the nobility, with its fulcrum in the Senate. There were "liberal" consuls like the Elder Cato, and "conservative" Tribunes like the Octavius who opposed Ti. Gracchus. Both parties put up candidates at elections, and used every sort of demagogic operation to get them in. And when money had failed to win an election, it got to work afterwards with (increasing) success upon the person elected.

In England Tories and Whigs constituted themselves, from the beginning of the nineteenth century, as parties, both becoming in form bourgeois and both taking up the liberal program literally. Whereby public opinion as usual was completely convinced and set at rest. This was a master-stroke, delivered at the correct moment; it prevented the formation of a party hostile to the Estate-principle such as arose in France in 1789. The members of the lower House, hitherto emissaries of the ruling stratum, became popular representatives, but still continued to depend financially upon it. The leadership remained in the same hands. And the opposition of the parties, which from 1830 assumed the titles of Liberal and Conservative almost as a matter of course, was always one of pluses and minuses, never of blank alternatives.

In these same years the literary freedom-movement of "young Germany" changed into a party-movement. And in America under Andrew Jackson the National-Whig and Democratic parties organized themselves as opposites; and open recognition was given to the principle

that elections were a business, and state offices from top to bottom the " spoils of the victors."

But the form of the governing minority *develops steadily from that of the Estate, through that of the Party, towards that of the Individual's following.* The outward sign of the end of Democracy and its transition into Cæsarism is not, for example, the disappearance of the party of Tiers État, the Liberal — but the disappearance of party itself as a form.

The sentiments, the popular aim, the abstract ideals that characterize all genuine party politics, dissolve. They are supplanted by *private* politics, the unchecked will-to-power of the race-strong few. An Estate has instincts, a party has a program, but a following has a master.

That was the course of events from Patricians and Plebeians, through Optimates and Populares, to Pompeians and Cæsarians. The period of real party government covers scarcely two centuries, and in our own case is, since the World War, well on the decline.

That the entire mass of the electorate, actuated by a common impulse, should send up men who are capable of managing their affairs — which is the naïve assumption in all constitutions — is a possibility only in the first rush, and presupposes that not even the rudiments of organization by definite groups exists. So it was in France in 1789 and in 1848.

An assembly has only to *be*, and tactical units will form at once within it, whose cohesion depends upon the will to *maintain* the dominant position once won. Far from regarding themselves as the mouthpieces of their constituents, they set about making all the expedients of agitation amenable to their influence and usable for their purposes.

A tendency that has organized itself in the people, has already *ipso facto* become the *tool* of the organization, and continues steadily along the same path until the organization also becomes in turn the tool of the leader.

The will-to-power is stronger than any theory. In the beginning the leading and the apparatus come into existence for the sake of the program. Then they are held on to defensively by their incumbents for the sake of power and booty — as is already universally the case today. Thousands in every country live on the party and the offices and functions that it distributes. Lastly the program vanishes from memory, and the organization works for its own sake alone.

Even before Cæsar there were written compacts between candidates and electors with specific provisions as to payment and performances. On the other side, just as in present-day America,[3] clubs and election committees were formed, which so controlled or frightened the mass of the electors of their wards as to be able to do election business with the great leaders, the pre-Cæsars, as one power with another. Far from this being the shipwreck of democracy, it is its very meaning and necessary issue; and the lamentations of unworldly idealists over this destruction of their hopes only show their blind ignorance of the inexorable duality of truths and facts and of the intimate linkage of intellect and money.

Politico-social theory is only one of the bases of party

[3] The reputation of Tammany Hall in New York is universal, but the relations approximate to this condition in all countries ruled by parties. The American Caucus, which first distributes the offices of State amongst its members and then forces their names upon the mass-electorate, was introduced into England by Joseph Chamberlain in his "National Liberal Federation," and in Germany its advances were rapid after 1919. O.S.

politics; but it is a necessary one. The proud series of such theories that runs from Rousseau to Marx has its antitype in the line of the Classical Sophists up to Plato and Zeno. In the case of China the characteristics of the corresponding doctrines have still to be extracted from Confucian and Taoist literature; it suffices to name the Socialist Moh-ti. In the Byzantine and Arabian literature of the Abbassid period they hold a large place; and they were driving forces in all the crises of the ninth century. That they existed in Egypt and in India also is proved by the spirit of events in the Hyksos-time and in Buddha's. Literary form is not essential to them — they are just as effectively disseminated by word of mouth, by sermon and by propaganda in sects and associations; this indeed is the standard method at the close of the Puritan movements — Islam and Anglo-American Christianity amongst them.

Whether these doctrines are "true" or "false" is — we must reiterate and emphasize — a question without meaning for political history. The refutation of, say, Marxism belongs to the realm of academic dissertation and public debates, in which everyone is always right and his opponent always wrong.

But whether they are *effective;* for how long the belief that actuality can be ameliorated by a system of concepts is a real force — *that* politics must reckon with. That does matter.

We of today find ourselves in a period of boundless confidence in the omnipotence of reason. Great general ideas of freedom, justice, humanity, progress are sacrosanct. The great theories are gospels. Their power to convince does not rest upon logical premises, for the mass of a party possesses neither the critical energy nor the de-

tachment seriously to test them, but upon the sacramental hypostasis in their keywords. At the same time, the spell is limited to the populations of the great cities and the period of Rationalism as the "educated man's religion." On a peasantry it has no hold, and even on the city masses its effect lasts only for a certain time. But *for* that time it has all the irresistibleness of a new revelation. They are converted to it, hang fervently upon the words and the preachers thereof, go to martyrdom on barricades and battle-field and gallows. Their gaze is set upon a political and social other-world, and dry sober criticism seems base, impious, worthy of death.

For this very reason documents like the *Contrat Social* and the *Communist Manifesto* are engines of highest power in the hands of forceful men who have come to the top in party life, and know how to form and to use the convictions of the dominated masses.

The power that these abstract ideals possess, however, scarcely extends in time beyond the two centuries that belong to party politics. Their end comes not from refutation, but from boredom – which has killed Rousseau long since and will shortly kill Marx. Men finally give up, not this or that theory, but the belief in theory of any kind. With it goes the sentimental optimism of an eighteenth century that imagined that unsatisfactory actualities could be improved by the application of concepts.

When Plato, Aristotle, and their contemporaries defined and blended the various kinds of Classical constitution so as to obtain a wise and beautiful resultant, all the world listened. And Plato himself tried to transform Syracuse in accordance with an ideological recipe – and sent the city downhill to its ruin. It appears to me equally cer-

tain that it was philosophical experimentation of this kind that put the Chinese southern states out of condition, and delivered them up to the imperialism of Tsin. The Jacobin fanatics of liberty and equality delivered France, from the Directory onward, into the hands of Army and Bourse for ever, and every Socialistic outbreak only blazes new paths for Capitalism. But when Cicero wrote his *De re publica* for Pompey, and Sallust his two comminations for Cæsar, nobody any longer paid attention. In the first century B.C. theories had become a threadbare school-exercise, and thenceforward power and power alone mattered.

For us, too – let there be no mistake about it – the age of theory is drawing to its end. The great systems of Liberalism and Socialism all arose between about 1750 and 1850. That of Marx is already half a century old, and it has had no successor. Inwardly it means, with its materialist view of history, that Nationalism has reached its extreme logical conclusion; it is therefore an end-term.

As belief in Rousseau's Rights of Man lost its force from (say) 1848, so belief in Marx lost its force from the World War. Contrast the devotion unto death that Rousseau's ideas found in the French Revolution with the attitude of the Socialists of 1918, who had to keep up before and in their adherents a conviction that they themselves no longer possessed – for the sake, not of the idea, but of the power that depended on it. One discerns also the stretches of the road ahead, where what still remains of program is doomed to fall by the way as being henceforth a mere handicap in the struggle for power.

Belief in program was the mark and the *glory* of our grandfathers. In our grandsons it will be a proof of provincialism.

This is the one side, the verbal side, of the great fact Democracy. It remains now to consider the other, the decisive side, that of race. Democracy would have remained in minds and on paper had there not been amongst its champions true master-natures for whom – unconscious though they may be, and often have been, of the fact – the people is nothing but an object and the ideal nothing but a means.

Demagogy inwardly is exactly the same as the diplomacy of the *ancien régime*, but designed for application to masses instead of to princes and ambassadors; to wild opinions and sentiments and will-outbursts instead of to choice spirits – an orchestra of brass instead of old chamber-music. All, even its most irresponsible, methods have been worked out by honest but practical democrats, and it was from them that the parties of tradition learnt them.

It is characteristic, however, of the course of democracy, that the authors of popular constitutions have never had any idea of the actual workings of their schemes – neither the authors of the "Servian" Constitution in Rome nor the National Assembly in Paris. These forms of theirs are not, like feudalism, the result of growth, but of thought (and based, moreover, not on deep knowledge of men and things, but on abstract ideas of right and justice). A gulf thus opens between the intellectual side of the laws and the practical habits that silently form under the pressure of them, and either adapt them to, or fend them off from, the rhythm of actual life. Only experience has ever taught the lesson – and only at the end of the whole development has it been assimilated – that the rights of the people and the influence of the people are two different things. The more nearly universal a fran-

chise is, the *less* becomes the power of the electorate.

In the beginning of a democracy the field belongs to intellect alone. History has nothing nobler and purer to show than the night session of August 4th, 1789 and the Tennis-Court Oath, or the assembly in the Frankfurt Paulskirche on the 18th of May 1848 – when men, with power in their very hands, debated general truths so long that the forces of actuality were able to rally and thrust the dreamers aside.

But, meantime, that other democratic quantity lost no time in making its appearance and reminding men of the fact that one can make use of constitutional rights only when one has money. The early democracy, which in our case reaches up to Lincoln, Bismarck, and Gladstone, has to learn this by *experience*. The later democracy, in our case mature parliamentarism, starts out from it; here truths and facts finally separate out in the form of party ideals and party funds. That a franchise should work even approximately as the idealist supposes it to work presumes the absence of any organized leadership operating on the electors (in *its* interest) to the extent that its available money permits. As soon as such leadership does appear, the vote ceases to possess anything more than the significance of a censure applied by the multitude to the individual organizations, over whose structure it possesses in the end not the slightest positive influence.

So also with the ideal thesis of Western constitutions, the fundamental right of the mass to choose its own representatives – it remains pure theory. For in actuality every developed organization recruits itself.

Finally the feeling emerges that the universal franchise contains no effective rights at all, not even that of choos-

ing between parties. For the powerful figures that have grown up on their soil control, through money, all the intellectual machinery of speech and script. They are able, on the one hand, to guide the individual's opinions as they please *above* the parties; and, on the other – through their patronage, influence, and legislation – to create a firm body of whole-hearted supporters (the " Caucus ") which excludes the rest and induces in it a vote-apathy which at the last it cannot shake off even for the great crises.

In appearance, there are vast differences between the Western parliamentary democracy, and the democracies of the Egyptian, Chinese, and Arabian Civilizations, to which the idea of a universal popular franchise is wholly alien. But in reality, for us in this age, the mass is " in form " as an *electorate* in exactly the same sense as it used to be " in form " as a collectivity of obedience – namely, as an *object for a subject.* Just as it was " in form " in Baghdad as the sects, and in Byzantium as its monks, and elsewhere again as a dominant army or a secret society or a " state within a state."

Freedom is, as always, purely *negative.* It consists in the repudiation of tradition, dynasty, Caliphate. But the executive power passes, at once and undiminished, from these institutions to new forces – party leaders, dictators, presidents, prophets, and their adherents – towards which the multitude continues to be unconditionally the passive object. That the mass all the same *feels* itself as freed is simply another outcome of the profound incompatibility between megalopolitan spirit and mature tradition. Its *acts*, so far from being independent, are in inward relation with its subjection to money-rule.

" Popular self-determination " is a courteous figure of

speech. In reality, under a universal-inorganic franchise, election has soon ceased to possess its original meaning. The more radical the political elimination of the matured old order of Estates and callings, the more formless and feckless the electoral mass, the more completely is it delivered into the hands of the new powers, the party leaders. These dictate their will to the people through all the machinery of intellectual compulsion; fence with each other for primacy by methods which in the end the multitude can neither perceive nor comprehend; and treat public opinion merely as a weapon to be forged and used for blows at each other. But this very process, viewed from another angle, is seen as an irresistible tendency driving every democracy further and further on the road to suicide.

The German Constitution of 1919 – standing by virtue of its date on the verge of the *decline* of democracy – most naïvely admits a dictature of the party machines, which have attracted all rights into themselves and are seriously responsible to no one. The notorious system of proportional election and the Reichslist secure their self-recruitment. In place of the " people's " rights, which were axiomatic in the Frankfurt Constitution of 1848, there is now only the right of parties. This, harmless as it sounds, really nurses within itself a Cæsarism of the organizations. In this respect it is the most " advanced " of all the constitutions. Its issue is visible already. A few quite small alterations, and it confers unrestricted power upon individuals.

The fundamental rights of a Classical people extended to the holding of the highest state and judicial offices. For

the exercise of these the people was "in form" in its Forum, where the Euclidean point-mass was corporeally assembled. There it was the object of an influencing process in the Classical style: namely, by bodily, near, and sensuous means; by a rhetoric that worked upon every ear *and eye;* by devices many of which to us would be repellent and almost intolerable, such as rehearsed sob-effects and the rending of garments; by shameless flattery of the audience, fantastic lies about opponents; by the employment of brilliant phrases and resounding cadenzas (of which there came to be a perfect repertory for this place and purpose); by games and presents; by threats and blows; but, above all, by money. We have its beginnings in the Athens of 400, and its appalling culmination in the Rome of Cæsar and Cicero. It is not a matter of degeneracy, it is the democratic ethos itself that is foredoomed of necessity to take such forms when it reaches maturity. After all, in a dictatorship of money, it is hardly fair to describe the employment of money as a sign of decadence.

When Pompey was still dreaming that he could evoke legions by stamping on the ground, Cæsar had long since condensed the dream to reality with his money. It must be clearly understood, however, that he did not introduce these methods, but found them in existence; he made himself master of them. For practically a century parties grouped on principles had been dissolving into personal followings grouped upon men, who pursued private political aims and were expert in handling the political weapons of their time.

Amongst these means, besides money, was influence upon the courts. Since Classical assemblies voted, but did not debate, the trial before the rostra was *a form of party*

battle, and the school of schools for political persuasiveness. The young politician began his career by indicting, and if possible annihilating, some great personage – as the nineteen-year-old Crassus annihilated the renowned Papirius Carbo, the friend of the Gracchi, who had later gone over to the Optimates. This was why Cato was tried no less than forty-four times, though acquitted in every case. The legal side of the question was entirely subordinate in these affairs.

Extortion and corruption were the usual charges.[4] As in those days these things were identical with politics, and the judges and plaintiffs had acted precisely in the same way as the defendants, the art consisted in using the forms of a well-acted ethical passion to cover a party speech, of which the real import was only comprehensible to the initiated. This corresponds entirely with the modern parliamentary usage. The "people" would be very much astonished to see party opponents, after delivering wild speeches in the chamber (for the reporters) chatting together in the lobbies; or to be told how a party passionately champions a proposal after it has made certain by agreement with the other side that it will not be passed. In Rome, too, the judgment was not the important thing in these "trials." It was enough if a defendant voluntarily left the city and so retired from the occupancy of, or candidature for, office.

The Classical, and supremely the Forum of Rome, drew the mass of the people together as a visible body in order to

[4] Two of many similar instances in America are those of Charles Evans Hughes, who began his career leading to the Supreme Court by riding fame obtained in attacking insurance companies; and Thomas E. Dewey, who made himself a prominent candidate for the Presidential nomination by bringing New York gangsters into court. E.F.D.

compel it to make that use of its rights which was desired of it. The "contemporary" English-American politics, in contrast, have created *through the press* a force-field of world-wide intellectual and financial tensions, in which every individual unconsciously takes up the place allotted to him. He must think, will, and act as a ruling personality somewhere or other in the distance thinks fit.

This is dynamics against statics, Faustian against Apollinian world-feeling, the passion of the third dimension against the pure sensible present. Man does not speak to man. The press and its associate, the electrical news-service, keep the waking-consciousness of whole peoples and continents under a deafening drum-fire of theses, catchwords, standpoints, scenes, feelings, day by day and year by year – so that every Ego becomes a mere function of a monstrous intellectual Something.

Money does not pass, politically, from one hand to the other. It does not turn itself into cards and wine. It is turned into *force*, and its quantity determines the intensity of its working influence.

Gunpowder and printing belong together – as *the two* grand means of Faustian distance-tactics. Both were discovered at the culmination of the Gothic, both arising out of Germanic technical thought. The Reformation, in the beginning of the Late period, witnessed the first flysheets and the first field-guns. The French Revolution, in the beginning of the Civilization, witnessed the first tempest of pamphlets in the autumn of 1788, and the first mass-fire of artillery at Valmy.

But with this the printed word, produced in vast quantity and distributed over enormous areas, became an uncanny weapon in the hands of him who knew how to use

it. In France it was still in 1788 a matter of expressing private convictions. But England was already past that, and deliberately seeking to produce impressions on the reader. The war of articles, flysheets, spurious memoirs, that was waged from London on French soil against Napoleon is the first great example. The scattered sheets of the Age of Enlightenment transformed themselves into "the Press" — a term of most significant anonymity. Now the *press campaign* appears as the prolongation — or the preparation — of war by other means. And in the course of the nineteenth century the strategy of outpost fights, feints, surprises, assaults, is developed to such a degree that a war may be lost ere the first shot is fired — because the Press has won it meantime.

Today we live so cowed under the bombardment of this intellectual artillery that hardly anyone can attain to the inward detachment that is required for a clear view of the monstrous drama. The will-to-power operating under a pure democratic disguise has finished off its masterpiece so well that the object's sense of freedom is actually flattered by the most thorough-going enslavement that has ever existed.

The liberal bourgeois mind is *proud* of the abolition of censorship, the last restraint; while the dictator of the press — Northcliffe! — keeps the slave-gang of his readers under the whip of his leading articles, telegrams, and pictures.

Democracy has by its newspaper completely expelled the book from the mental life of the people. The book-world, with its profusion of standpoints that compelled thought to select and criticize, is now a real possession only for a few. The people reads the *one* paper, "its" paper — which forces itself through the front doors by millions

daily, spellbinds the intellect from morning to night, drives the book into oblivion by its more engaging layout, and if one or another specimen of a book does emerge into visibility, forestalls and eliminates its possible effects by "reviewing" it.

What is truth? For the multitude, that which it continually reads and hears. A forlorn little drop may settle somewhere and collect grounds on which to determine "the truth." But what it obtains is just *its* truth. The other, the public truth of the moment, which alone matters for effects and successes in the fact-world, is today a product of the Press. What the Press wills, is true. Its commanders evoke, transform, interchange truths. Three weeks of press work, and the truth is acknowledged by everybody. Its bases are irrefutable for just so long as money is available to maintain them intact.

The Classical rhetoric, too, was designed for effect and not content – as Shakespeare brilliantly demonstrates in Antony's funeral oration – but it did limit itself to the bodily audience and the moment. What the dynamism of our Press wants is *permanent* effectiveness. It must keep men's minds continuously under its influence. Its arguments are overthrown as soon as the advantage of financial power passes over to the counter-arguments and brings these still oftener to men's eyes and ears. At that moment the needle of public opinion swings round to the stronger pole. Everybody convinces himself at once of the new truth, and regards himself awakened out of error.

With the political press is bound up the need of universal school-education, which in the Classical world was completely lacking. In this demand there is an element – quite unconscious – of desiring to shepherd the masses, as the

object of party politics, into the newspaper's power-area. The idealist of the early democracy regarded popular education, without *arrière pensée*, as enlightenment pure and simple. And even today one finds here and there weak heads that become enthusiastic on the Freedom of the Press. But it is precisely this that smooths the path for the coming Cæsars of the world-press. Those who have learnt to read succumb to their power. The visionary self-determination of Late democracy winds up in a thorough-going determination of the people by the powers whom the printed word obeys.

In the contests of today tactics consists in depriving the opponent of this weapon. In the unsophisticated infancy of its power, the newspaper suffered from official censorship which the champions of tradition wielded in self-defence, and the bourgeoisie cried out that the freedom of the spirit was in danger. Now the multitude placidly goes its way; it has definitively won for itself this freedom.

But in the background, unseen, the new forces are fighting one another by buying the Press. Without the reader's observing it, the paper, *and himself with it*, changes masters. In preparation for the World War the Press of whole countries was brought financially under the command of London and Paris, and the peoples belonging to them reduced to an unqualified intellectual slavery. The more democratic the inner form of a nation is, the more readily and completely it succumbs to this danger. Here also money triumphs and forces the free spirits into its service. No tamer has his animals more under his power. Unleash the people as reader-mass, and it will storm through the streets and hurl itself upon the target indicated, terrifying, breaking windows. A hint to the press-staff and it will

become quiet and go home. The Press today is an army with carefully organized arms and branches, with journalists as officers, and readers as soldiers.

But here, as in every army, the soldier obeys blindly, and war-aims and operation-plans change without his knowledge. The reader neither knows, nor is allowed to know, the purposes for which he is used, nor even the rôle that he is to play. A more appalling caricature of freedom of thought cannot be imagined. Formerly a man did not dare to think freely. Now he dares, but cannot; his will to think is only a willingness to think to order, and this is what he feels as *his* liberty.

On the other side of this belated freedom – it is permitted to everyone to say what he pleases, *but* the Press is free to take notice of what he says or not. It can condemn any " truth " to death simply by not undertaking its communication to the world – a terrible censorship of silence, which is all the more potent in that the masses of newspaper readers are absolutely unaware that it exists. The great Burning of the Books in China was innocuous by comparison.

Here, as ever in the birth-pangs of Cæsarism, emerges a trait of the buried springtime. The arc of happening is about to close on itself. Just as in the concrete and steel buildings the expression-will of early Gothic once more bursts forth, but cold, controlled, and Civilized; so the iron will of the Gothic Church to power over souls reappears as – the " freedom of democracy." The age of the " book " is flanked on either hand by that of the sermon and that of the newspaper. Books are a personal expression; sermon and newspaper obey an impersonal *purpose*.

The years of Scholasticism afford the only example in

world-history of an intellectual discipline that was applied universally and permitted no writing, no speech, no thought to come forth that contradicted the *willed* unity. This is spiritual dynamics. Classical, Indian, or Chinese mankind would have been horrified at this spectacle. But the same things recur, and as a *necessary* result of the European-American liberalism – "the despotism of freedom against tyranny," as Robespierre put it. In lieu of stake and faggots there is the great silence.[5]

The dictature of party leaders supports itself upon that of the Press. The competitors strive by means of money to detach readers – nay, peoples – *en masse* from the hostile allegiance, and to bring them under their own mind-training. And all that they learn, in this mind-training, is what it is considered that they should know – a higher will puts together the picture of their world for them. There is no need now, as there was for Baroque princes, to impose military-service liability on the subject. One whips their souls with articles, telegrams, and pictures (Northcliffe!) until they *clamour* for weapons and force their leaders into a conflict to which they *willed* to be forced.

This is the end of Democracy. If in the world of truths it is *proof* that decides all, in that of facts it is *success*. Success means that one being triumphs over the others. Life has won through, and the dreams of the world-improvers

[5] The passing of newspapers, and all other organs of propaganda, under the influence of the political leaders, to be used for the same controls that Capital previously exercised, is foreseen by Spengler in his discussion of the Statesman: "*He must command them.*" Radio broadcasting has of course had its development since Spengler published this work; he would perhaps have regarded it as the ultimate example of our Culture's will to reach the Infinite. Broadcasting would have seemed to him another of the instruments which the Statesman must "command"; and he again might well have concluded, "The realist merely asks at whose disposal it is." E.F.D.

have turned out to be but the tools of *master*-natures.

In the Late Democracy, *race* bursts forth and either makes ideals its slaves, or throws them scornfully into the pit. It was so, too, in Egyptian Thebes, in Rome, in China — but in no other Civilization has the will-to-power manifested itself in so inexorable a form as in this of ours.

The thought, and consequently the action, of the mass are kept under iron pressure. For this reason, and for this reason only, men are permitted to be readers and voters, in a dual slavery. The parties become the obedient retinues of a few, and the shadow of coming Cæsarism already touches them. As the English kingship became in the nineteenth century, so parliaments will become in the twentieth, a solemn and empty pageantry. As then sceptre and crown, so now peoples' rights are paraded for the multitude, and all the more punctiliously the less they really signify.

It was for this reason that the *cautious* Augustus never let pass an opportunity of emphasizing old and venerated customs of Roman freedom. The power is migrating even today, and correspondingly elections are degenerating for us into the farce that they were in Rome. Money organizes the process in the interests of those who possess it, and election affairs become a preconcerted game that is staged as popular self-determination. Herein lies the secret of why all radical (i.e., poor) parties necessarily become the tools of the money-powers, the Equites, the Bourse. Theoretically their enemy is capital; practically they attack, not the Bourse, but Tradition on behalf of the Bourse. This is as true today as it was for the Gracchan age, and in all countries. Fifty per cent of mass-leaders are procurable by money, office, or opportunities to " come in on the

ground-floor"; and with them they bring their whole party.

If election was originally *revolution in legitimate forms*, it has now exhausted those forms; and what takes place is that mankind "elects" its Destiny again by the primitive methods of bloody violence when the politics of money become intolerable.

Through money, democracy becomes its own destroyer, after money has destroyed intellect. Just *because* the illusion that actuality can be improved by the ideas of any Zeno or Marx has fled away; because men have learned that in the realm of reality one power-will *can be overthrown only by another* (for that is the great human experience of Contending States periods); there wakes at last a deep yearning for all old and worthy tradition that still lingers alive.

Men are tired to disgust of money-economy. They hope for salvation from somewhere or other, for some real thing of honour and chivalry, of inward nobility, of unselfishness and duty.

And now dawns the time when the form-filled powers of the blood, which the rationalism of the Megalopolis has suppressed, reawaken in the depths. Everything in the order of dynastic tradition and old nobility that has saved itself up for the future; everything that there is of high money-disdaining ethic; everything that is intrinsically sound enough to be, in Frederick the Great's words, the *servant* – the hard-working, self-sacrificing, caring *servant* – of the State; all that I have described elsewhere in one word as Socialism in contrast to Capitalism – all this becomes suddenly the focus of immense life-forces.

Cæsarism *grows* on the soil of Democracy, but its roots

thread deeply into the underground of blood tradition. The Classical Cæsar derived his power from the Tribunate, and his dignity and therewith his permanency from his being the Princeps. Here too the soul of old Gothic wakens anew. The spirit of the knightly orders overpowers plunderous Vikingism.

The mighty ones of the future may possess the earth as their private property – for the great political form of the Culture is irremediably in ruin. But it matters not, for, formless and limitless as their power may be, it has a task. And this task is the unwearying care for this world as it is, which is the very opposite of the dis-interestedness of the money-power age, and demands high honour and conscientiousness. But for this very reason there now sets in the final battle between Democracy and Cæsarism, between the leading forces of dictatorial money-economics and the *purely political* will-to-order of the Cæsars. In this *final battle between Economics and Politics*, the latter *reconquers* its realm.

CHAPTER 3

SOME ECONOMIC FUNDAMENTALS

> "Economically there is no worker class. *That is an invention of theorists. The politicians have taken it up and used it as a means of building themselves parties.*"

THE STANDPOINT from which to comprehend the economic history of great Cultures is not to be looked for on economic ground. Economic thought and action are a side of life that acquires a false appearance when regarded as a self-contained *kind* of life. Least of all is the secure standpoint to be had on the basis of the present-day world-economics, which for the last 150 years has been mounting fantastically, perilously, and in the end almost desperately — an economics, moreover, that is exclusively Western-dynamic, anything but common-human.

That which we call national economy today is built up on premises that are openly and specifically English. The industry of machines, which is unknown to all other Cultures, stands in the centre as though it were a matter of course. Without men being conscious of the fact, it com-

pletely dominates the formulation of ideas and the deduction of so-called laws. Credit-money, in the special form imparted to it by the relations of world-trade and export-industry in a peasantless England, serves as the foundation whereupon to define words like capital, value, price, property. The definitions are then transferred without more ado to other Culture-stages and life-cycles. The insular position of England has determined a conception of politics, and of its relation to economics, that rules in all economic theories. The creators of this economic *picture* were David Hume and Adam Smith. Everything that has since been written about them or against them always presupposes the critical structure and methods of their systems. This is as true of Carey and List as it is of Fourier and Lassalle.

As for Smith's greatest adversary, Marx, it matters little how loudly he protests against English capitalism when he is thoroughly imbued with its images. His protest is itself a recognition. Its only aim is, through a new kind of accounting, to confer upon objects the advantage of being subjects.

From Adam Smith to Marx, economics is nothing but self-analysis of the economic thinking of a single Culture on a particular development-level. Rationalistic through and through, it starts from Material and its conditions, needs, and motives, instead of from the *Soul* – of generations, Estates, and peoples – and its creative power. It looks upon men as constituent parts of situations, and knows nothing of the big personality and history-shaping will of individuals or of groups – the will that sees in the facts of economics not ends, but means. It takes economic life to be something that can be accounted for without

remainder by visible causes and effects – something of which the structure is quite mechanical and completely self-contained – and something even that stands in some sort of causal relation to religion and politics. As this outlook is the systematic and not the historical, the timeless and universal validity of its concepts and rules is an article of faith. Its ambition is to establish the one and only correct method of applying "the" science of management. And accordingly, wherever its truths have come into contact with the facts, it has experienced a complete fiasco – as was the case with the prophecies of bourgeois theorists concerning the World War, and with those of proletarian theorists on the induction of the Soviet economy.

Economics has no system, but a physiognomy. To fathom the secret of its inner form, its *soul*, demands the physiognomic flair. To succeed in it, it is necessary to be a "judge" of it as one is a "judge" of men or of horses, and requires even less "knowledge" than that which a horseman needs to have of zoölogy.

All economic life is the expression of a soul-life.

Economics and politics are sides of the *one* livingly flowing current of being, and not of the waking-consciousness, the intellect. Life, therefore, has a political and an economic kind of "condition" of fitness for history. They overlie, they support, they oppose each other, but the political is unconditionally the first. Life's will is to preserve itself and to prevail, or, rather, to make itself stronger in order that it may prevail. Nourishment and winning-through – the difference of dignity between the two sides of life is recognizable in their relation to death.

There is no contrast so profound as that between *hunger-death and hero-death.* Economically, life is in the wid-

est sense threatened, dishonoured, and *debased* by hunger – with which is to be included stunting of possibilities, straitened circumstances, darkness, and pressure, not less than starvation in the literal sense. Whole peoples have lost the tense force of their race through the gnawing wretchedness of their living. Here men die *of* something and not *for* something. Politics sacrifices men for an idea, they fall for an idea. But economy merely wastes them away.

War is the creator, hunger the destroyer, of all great things. In war life is elevated by death, often to that point of irresistible force whose mere existence guarantees victory. But in the economic life, hunger awakens the ugly, vulgar, and wholly unmetaphysical sort of fearfulness for one's life under which the higher form-world of a Culture miserably collapses, and the naked struggle for existence of the human beasts begins.

Since economics belongs to the race side of life, it possesses, like politics, a customary ethic and not a moral. A vocation-class, like an Estate, possesses a *matter-of-course* feeling – not for good and evil – but for good and bad. Not to have this feeling is to be void of honour, law. For those engaged *in* the economic life, too, honour stands as central criterion, with its tact and fine flair for what is " the right thing " – something quite separate from the sin-idea underlying the religious contemplation *of* the world. There exist, not only a very definite vocational honour amongst merchants, craftsmen, and peasants; but equally definite gradations downward for the shopkeeper, the exporter, the banker, the contractor, and even, as we all know, for thieves and beggars – in so far as two or three of them feel themselves as fellow practitioners. No one

has stated or written out these customary-ethics, but they exist; and, like class-ethics everywhere and always, they are binding only within the circle of membership.

Religious-ascetic fundamentals such as "selfless," "sinless," are without meaning in the economic life. For the true saint, economics in itself is sinful – and not merely the taking of interest, or pleasure in riches, or the envy of the poor. The saying concerning the "lilies of the field" is for deeply religious (and philosophical) natures unreservedly true. The whole weight of their being lies outside economics and politics and all other facts of "this world."

The religious man will always try in vain, catechism in hand, to improve the instincts of his political environment. But it goes on its way undisturbed and leaves him to his thoughts. The saint can only adapt himself to this environment – and then he becomes a Church politician and conscienceless – or else flee from it into a hermitage or even into the Beyond. The same happens also – and here not without a comic side to it – in the intellectualism of the city. The philosopher who has built up an ethical-social system that is replete with virtue and is (of course) the only true one, may enlighten the economic life as to how it should behave and at what it should aim. It is ever the same spectacle, whether labelled liberal, anarchistic, or socialistic; or derived from Plato, Proudhon, or Marx. Economy carries on undisturbed, and leaves the thinker to choose between withdrawing to pour out on paper his lamentations of this world, and entering it as an economic politician – in which case he either makes himself ridiculous, or else promptly throws his theory to the devil and starts to win himself a leading place.

All higher economic life develops itself on and over a peasantry. Peasantry, *per se*, does not presuppose any basis but itself. It is, so to say, race-in-itself, plantlike and historyless, producing and using wholly for itself, with an outlook on the world that sweepingly regards every other economic existence as incidental and contemptible.

To this *producing* kind of economy there is presently opposed an *acquisitive* kind, which makes use of the former as an object – as a source of nourishment, tribute, or plunder. Politics and trade are in their beginnings quite inseparable, both being masterful, personal, warlike; both with a hunger for power and booty that produces quite another outlook upon the world – an outlook which is pretty candidly expressed in the choice of the lion and the bear, the hawk and the falcon, as armorial badges.

Primitive war is always also booty-war, and primitive trade intimately related to plunder and piracy.

Politics and trade in developed form – the art of achieving material successes over an opponent by means of intellectual superiority – are both a replacement of war by other means. Every kind of diplomacy is of a business nature, every business of a diplomatic. And both are based upon penetrative judgment of men and physiognomic tact. The adventure-spirit in great seafarers like the Phœnicians, Etruscans, Normans, Venetians, Hanseatics; the spirit of shrewd banking-lords like the Fugger and the Medici, and of mighty financiers like Crassus and the mining and trust magnates of our own day, must possess the strategic talent of the *general* if its operations are to succeed. Pride in the clan-house, the paternal heritage, the family tradition, develops and counts in the economic sphere as in the political. The great fortunes are like the

kingdoms and have their history. Polycrates and Solon, Lorenzo de' Medici and Jürgen Wullenweber, are far from being the only examples of political ambitions developing out of commercial.

But the genuine prince and statesman wants to rule, and the genuine merchant only wants to be wealthy. Here the acquisitive economy divides to pursue aim and means separately. One may aim at booty for the sake of power, or at power for the sake of booty. The great ruler, too, the Hwang-ti, the Tiberius, the Frederick II – has the will to wealth, the will to be "rich in land and subjects"; but it is with and under a sense of high responsibilities. A man may lay hands on the treasures of the whole world with a good conscience, not to say as a matter of course; he may lead a life of radiant splendour or even dissipation – if only he feels himself to be the engine of a mission – like Napoleon, Cecil Rhodes, the Roman Senate of the third century. When he feels so, the idea of private property can scarcely be said to exist, so far as he is concerned.

He who is out for purely economic advantages – as the Carthaginians were in Roman times and, in a far greater degree still, the Americans in ours – is correspondingly incapable of purely political *thinking*. In the decisions of high politics he is ever deceived and made a tool of, as the case of Wilson shows – especially when the absence of statesmanlike instinct leaves a chair vacant for moral sentiments. This is why the great economic groupings of the present day (for example, employers' and employees' unions) pile one political failure on another; unless indeed they find a real political politician as leader, and he – makes use of them.

Economic and political thinking, in spite of a high

degree of consonance of form, are in direction (and therefore in all tactical details) basically different. Great business successes – using the phrase widely, and including, for instance, the rise of workmen, journalists, and men of learning to positions of leadership – awaken an unbridled sense of *public* power. In the very word "capital" one catches an unmistakable undertone of this. But it is only in a few individuals that the colour and direction of their willing and their criteria of situations of things undergo change. Only when a man has really ceased to feel his enterprise as "his own business," and its aim as the simple amassing of property, does it become possible for the captain of industry to become the statesman, the Cecil Rhodes.

But, conversely, the men of the political world are exposed to the danger of their will and thought for historical tasks degenerating into mere provision for their private life-upkeep. Then a nobility can become a robber-order, and we see emerging the familiar types of princes and ministers, demagogues and revolution-heroes, whose zeal exhausts itself in lazy comfortableness and the piling-up of immense riches. There is little to choose in this respect between Versailles and the Jacobin Club, business bosses and trade-union leaders, Russian governors and Bolshevists. And in the maturity of democracy, the politics of those who have "got there" is identical, not merely with business, but with speculative business of the dirtiest great-city sort.

All this, however, is the very manifestation of the hidden course of a high Culture. And thus we begin to discern the morphology of economic history:

To feudalism belongs the economy of the townless countryside. With the State ruled radially from cities ap-

pears the urban economy of money. This rises, with the oncoming of the Civilization, into the dictature of money, simultaneously with the victory of world-city democracy. The economic life, just like the social, forms itself pyramidally. In the rustic underground a thoroughly primitive condition maintains itself almost unaffected by the Culture. The Late urban economy, which is already the activity of a resolute minority, looks down with steady contempt upon the pristine land-economy that continues all around it; the latter in turn glares sulkily at the intellectualized style that prevails within the walls.

Finally the cosmopolis brings in a Civilized world-economy, which radiates from very small nuclei within a few centres, and subjects the rest to itself as a provincial economy, while in the remoter landscapes thoroughly primitive ("patriarchal") custom often prevails still.

With the growth of the cities the way of life becomes ever more artificial, subtle and complex. The great-city worker of Cæsar's Rome, of Haroun-al-Raschid's Baghdad, and of the present-day Berlin, feels as self-evidently necessary much that the richest yeoman deep in the country regards as silly luxury. But this self-evident standard is hard to reach, and hard to maintain. In every Culture the quantum of work grows bigger and bigger, until at the beginning of every Civilization we find an intensity of economic life, of which the tensions are excessive and dangerous, and impossible to maintain for a long period.

In the end a rigid, permanent-set condition is reached, a strange hotch-potch of refined-intellectual and crude-primitive factors, such as the Greeks found in Egypt and we have found in modern India and China – unless, of course, the crust is being disintegrated from below by the

pressure of a young Culture, like the Classical in Diocletian's time.

Relatively to this economic movement, men are economically " in form " as an economic *class*, just as they are in form for world-history as a political Estate. Each individual has an economic position *within the economic order* just as he has a grade of some sort in the *society*. Now, both these kinds of allegiances make claims upon the feelings, thoughts, and relations all at once. A life insists on being, and on meaning something as well.

The confusion of our ideas is made worse confounded by the fact that, today, as in Hellenistic times, political parties, in their desire to ameliorate the *upkeep*-standards of certain economic groups, have elevated these groups to the dignity of a political Estate – as Marx, for instance, elevated the class of factory-workers. Confusion! For the first and genuine Estate is nobility. From it the officer and the judge, and all concerned in the highest duties of government and administration, are direct derivatives. They are Estate-like formations that *mean* something. But the grand symbolism of the Estates goes out with castle and cathedral. The *Tiers*, already, is the Non-Estate, the remainder, a miscellaneous and manifold congeries, which means very little as such save in the moments of political protest; so the importance it creates *for itself* is a party importance.

Economically *there is no worker-class*. That is an invention of theorists who have fixed their eyes on the position of factory-workers in England – an industrial, peasantless land in a transitional phase. They then extended the resultant scheme so confidently over all the Cultures and all the ages that the politicians have taken it up and used

it as a means of building themselves parties. In actuality there is an almost uncountable number of purely serving activities in workshop and counting-houses, office and cargo-deck, roads, mine-shafts, fields, and meadows. This counting-up, portering, running of errands, hammering, serving, and minding often enough lacks that element which elevates life above mere upkeep, and invests work with dignity and delight – the delight attaching, for example, to the status-duties of the officer and the savant, or the personal triumphs of the engineer, the manager, and the merchant. But, even apart from that, all these things are quite incapable of being compared amongst themselves. The brain or brawn of the work, its situation in village or in megalopolis, the duration and intensity of the doing of it, bring it to pass that farm-labourers, bank clerks, and tailors' hands live in perfectly different economic worlds. It is only, I repeat, the party politics of quite Late phases that lures them by means of catchwords into a protest-combination, with the intention of making use of its aggregate mass. The classical slave, on the contrary, is such chiefly in terms of constitutional law. That is, so far as the body-Polis was concerned, he simply did not exist. But economically he might be land-worker or craftsman, or even director or wholesale merchant with a huge capital (*peculium*), with palaces and country villas and a host of subordinates – freemen included. What he could become, over and above this, in late Roman times, will appear in the sequel.

CHAPTER 4

WHAT MONEY DOES

> "*To think economically on any terms but these is simply to become a pawn in the money-operations of the great city.*"

That which separates out from a life in which everyone is alike producer and consumer is *goods*. Traffic in goods is the mark of all early intercourse, whether the object be brought from the far distance, or merely shifted about within the limits of the village or even the farm. A piece of goods is that which adheres by some quiet threads of its essence to the life that has produced it or the life that uses it. A peasant drives "his" cow to market, a woman puts away "her" finery in the cupboard. We say that a man is endowed with this world's "goods." The word "*possession*" takes us back right into the plantlike origin of property, into which this particular being – no other – has grown, from the roots up. Exchange in these periods is a process whereby goods pass from one circle of life into another. They are valued with reference to life, according to a sliding-scale of *felt* relation to the moment.

There is neither a conception of value nor a kind or amount of goods that constitutes a general measure. For gold and coin are goods too, whose rarity and indestructibility causes them to be highly prized.

With the soul of the town a quite other kind of life awakens. As soon as the market has become the town, it is not longer a question of mere centres for goods-streams traversing a purely peasant landscape. A second world is within the walls, for which the merely producing life " out there " is nothing but object and means, and out of which another stream begins to circle. The true urban man is *not* a producer in the prime terrene sense. He has not the inward linkage with soil or with the goods that pass through his hands. He does not live with these, but looks at them from outside and appraises them in relation to his own life-upkeep.

With this goods become wares, exchange turnover, *and in place of thinking in goods we have thinking in money.*

With this a purely extensional something, a form of limit-defining, is abstracted from the visible objects of economics, just as mathematical thought abstracts something from the mechanistically conceived environment. Abstract money corresponds exactly to abstract number. Both are entirely inorganic.

The economic picture is reduced exclusively to quantities, whereas the important point about " goods " had been their quality. For the early-period peasant " his " cow is, first of all, just what it is, a unit being – and only secondarily an object of exchange. But for the economic outlook of the true townsman, the only thing that exists is an abstract money-value which at the moment happens to be in the shape of a cow that can always be transformed into

that of, say, a bank-note. Similarly, the genuine engineer sees in a famous waterfall not a unique natural spectacle, but just a calculable quantum of unexploited energy.

It is an error of all modern money-theories that they start from the value-token or even the material of the payment-medium, instead of from the form of economic thought.

In reality, money, like number and law, is a *category of thought*. There is a monetary, just as there is a juristic, and a mathematical, and a technical, thinking of the world-around. From the sense-experience of a house we obtain quite different abstracts – according as we are mentally appraising it from the point of view of a merchant, a judge, or an engineer; and with reference to a balance-sheet, a lawsuit, or a danger of collapse.

For a peasant there are only ephemeral felt values. What he does not use, or does not want to possess, has " no value " for him. Only in the economy-picture of the real townsman are there objective values – and kinds of values which have an existence apart from his private needs, as thought-elements of a generalized validity. All value-theories, however objective they are meant to be, are developed – and inevitably so – out of a subjective principle. That of Marx, for example, defines value in the way that promotes the interest of the manual worker, the effort of the discoverer or the organizer seeming to him, therefore, valueless. But it would be wrong to describe this as " erroneous." All these theories are " right " for their supporters and " wrong " for their opponents, and it is not reasons but *life* that settles whether one is a supporter or an opponent.

Whereas the earlier mankind *compares* goods, and does

so not by means of the reason only, the later *reckons* the values of wares, and does so by rigid unqualitative measures. Now gold is no longer measured against the cow, but the cow against the gold, and the result is expressed by an abstract number, the price.

Whether and how this measure of value finds symbolic expression in a value-sign – as the written, spoken, or represented number-sign is, in a sense, number – depends on the economic style of the particular Culture, each of which produces a different sort of money. The common condition for the appearance of this is the existence of an urban population that thinks economically in terms of it. It is its particular character that settles whether the value-token shall serve also as payment-medium. Thus the Classical coin and *probably* the Babylonian silver did so serve. Whereas the Egyptian *deben* (raw copper weighed out in pounds) was a measure of exchange, but neither token nor payment-medium. The Western and the "contemporary" Chinese banknote, again, is a medium, but not a measure. We are accustomed to deceive ourselves thoroughly as to the rôle played by coins of precious metal in *our* sort of economy. They are just wares, fashioned in imitation of the Classical custom. Hence, measured against book-values of credit money, they have a "price."

The outcome of this way of thinking is that the old *possession*, bound up with life and the soil, gives way to the *fortune*, which is essentially mobile and qualitatively undefined. It does not *consist in* goods, but it is *laid out in* them. Considered by itself, it is a purely numerical quantum of money-value.

As the seat of this thinking, the city becomes the money-market, the centre of values. A stream of money-values

begins to infuse, intellectualize, and command the stream of goods. *And with this the trader, from being an organ of economic life, becomes its master.*

Thinking in money is always, in one way or another, trade or business thinking. It presupposes the productive economy of the land, and, therefore, is always primarily acquisitive; for there is no third course. The very words "acquisition," "gain," "speculation," point to a profit tricked off from the goods *en route* to the consumer — an *intellectual plunder* — and for that reason are inapplicable to the early peasantry.

Only by attuning ourselves exactly to the spirit and economic outlook of the true townsman can we realize what they mean. He works not for needs, but for sales, for "money." The business view gradually infuses itself into every kind of activity. The countryman, inwardly bound up with traffic in goods, was at once giver and taker, and even the trader of the primitive market was hardly an exception to this rule. But with money-traffic there appears between producer and consumer, as though between two separate worlds, the third party, the *middleman*, whose thought is dominated *a priori* by the business side of life. He forces the producer to offer, and the consumer to inquire of him. He elevates mediation to a monopoly and thereafter to economic primacy, and forces the other two to be "in form" in *his* interest, to prepare the wares according to *his* reckonings, and to cheapen them under the pressure of *his* offers.

He who commands this mode of thinking is the master of money. In all the Cultures evolution takes this road. Lysias informs us in his oration against the corn-merchants that the speculators at the Piræus frequently spread re-

ports of the wreck of a grain-fleet or of the outbreak of war, in order to produce a panic. In Hellenistic-Roman times, it was a widespread practice to arrange for land to go out of cultivation, or for imports to be held in bond, in order to force up prices. In the Egyptian New Empire, wheat-corners in the American style were made possible by a bill-discounting that is fully comparable with the banking operations of the West. Cleomenes, Alexander the Great's administrator for Egypt, was able by book transactions to get the whole corn-supply into his own hands, thereby producing a famine far and wide in Greece and raking in immense gains for himself.

To think economically on any terms but these is simply to become a mere pawn in the money-operations of the great city. This style of thought soon gets hold of the waking-consciousness of the entire urban population and, therefore, of everyone who plays any serious part in the conduct of economic history.

All highly developed economy is urban economy. World-economy itself, the characteristic economy of all Civilizations, ought properly to be called world-city-economy. The destinies even of this world-economy are now decided in a few places, the money-markets of the world – once in Babylon, Thebes, and Rome; then in Byzantium and Baghdad; now in London, New York, Berlin, and Paris. The residue is a starveling provincial economy that runs on in its narrow circles without being conscious of its utter dependence.

Finally, money is the form of intellectual energy in which the ruler-will – the political and social, technical and mental, creative power – the craving for a full-sized life – are concentrated. Shaw is entirely right when he

says: " The universal regard for money is the one hopeful fact in our civilization . . . the two things [money and life] are inseparable: money is the counter that enables life to be distributed socially: it *is* life. . . ."

Civilization is the stage of a Culture at which tradition and personality have lost their immediate effectiveness, and every idea, to be actualized, has to be put into terms of money. At the beginning a man was wealthy because he was powerful. Now he is powerful because he has money. Intellect reaches the throne only when money puts it there. Democracy is the completed equating of money with political power.

Through the economic history of every Culture there runs a desperate conflict waged by the soil-rooted tradition of a race, by its *soul*, against the spirit of money. The peasant-wars of the beginning of a Late period (in the Classical, 700–500; in the Western, 1450–1650; in the Egyptian, end of Old Kingdom) are the first reaction of the blood against the money that is stretching forth its hand from the waxing cities over the soil.

If money is unable to attack possession, it insinuates itself into the thoughts of the noble and peasant possessors, until the inherited possession that has grown with the family's growth begins to seem like resources merely " put into " land and soil and, so far as their essence is concerned, mobile. Money aims at mobilizing *all* things. World-economy is the actualized economy of values that are completely detached in thought from the land, and made fluid. The Classical money-thinking, from Hannibal's day, transformed whole cities into coin, and whole populations into slaves, and converted both into money that could be

brought from everywhere to Rome, and used outwards from Rome as a power.

The increasing intensity of this thinking appears in the economic picture as a *growth of the available money-mass*, which is abstract and imagined and has nothing to do with the visible supply of gold as a ware. The " stiffening " of the money-market, for example, is a purely intellectual process played out in the hands of a small handful of men. The increasing energy of money-thinking consequently awakens, in every Culture, the feeling that the " value of money is going down " with reference to the unit of calculation. It was enormously so, for example, in the time between Solon and Alexander. What actually happens is that the mercantile units of value have become artificial, and no longer comparable with the primary and livingly experiential values of the peasant economy. In the end it ceases to matter in what figures the Attic treasure of the Delian League (454) or the sums involved in the peace-treaties of 241 and 201, or the booty of Pompey in 64 are reckoned. And whether we ourselves shall pass in a few decades from the milliards — still unknown in 1850, but commonplace today — to the billions, likewise ceases to matter. There is no common standard for the value of a talent in 430 and in 30 B.C.; for gold, like cattle and corn, has continually altered not only its own numeration, but its significance within an ever-advancing urban economy. The only steady element is the fact that quantity of money — not to be confused with the stock of tokens and the means of payment — is an *alter ego* mirroring thought in money.

The Faustian money-thinking " opens up " whole con-

tinents – the waterpower of gigantic river-basins, the muscular power of the Peoples of broad regions, the coal measures, the virgin forests, the laws of Nature – and transforms them all into financial energy; this is laid out in one way or in another – in the shape of press, or elections, or budgets, or armies – for the realization of masters' plans. Ever new values are abstracted from whatever world-stock is still, from the business point of view, unclaimed – "the slumbering spirits of gold," as John Gabriel Borkman says. And what the things themselves are, apart from this, is of no economic significance at all.

As every Culture has its own mode of thinking in money, so also it has its own money-symbol, through which it brings to visible expression its principle of valuation in the economic field.

Economically, as in other ways, Classical man saw his world-around as a sum of bodies. They changed their place, travelled, drove or hit or annihilated one another, as in Democritus's description of Nature. Man was a body among bodies; the Polis as sum thereof was a body of higher order. All the needs of life consisted in corporeal quantities. Money, too, therefore represented such a body, in the same way as an Apollo-statue represented a god. About 650, simultaneously with the stone body of the Doric temple and the free statue true-modelled in the round, appeared the *coin*, a metal weight of beautiful impressed form.

Value as a magnitude had long existed – in fact as long as this Culture itself. In Homer, a talent is a little aggregate of gold, in bullion and decorative objects, of a definite

total weight. The Shield of Achilles represents "two talents" of gold, and even as late as Roman times it was usual to specify silver and gold vessels by weight.

The discovery of the Classically formed money-body is so extraordinary that we have not even yet grasped it, in its deep and purely Classical significance. We regard it as one of the "achievements of humanity," and so we strike these coinages everywhere, just as we put statues in our streets and squares. So much and no more it is within our power to do. We can imitate the shape, but we cannot impart the same economic significance thereto.

The coin *as money* is a purely Classical phenomenon — only possible in an environment conceived wholly on Euclidean ideas. Notions like income, resources, debt, capital, meant in the Classical cities something quite different from what they mean to us. They meant, not economic energy radiating from a point, but a sum of valuable objects in hand. Wealth was always a mobile *cash-supply*, which was altered by addition and subtraction of valuable objects, and had nothing at all to do with possessions in land. For in Classical thinking the two were completely separate. Credit consisted in the lending of cash, in the expectation that the loan would be repaid in cash. Catiline was poor because, in spite of his wide estates, he could find nobody to lend him the cash that he needed for his political aims. And the immense debts of Roman politicians had for their ultimate security, not their equivalent in land, but the definite prospect of a province to be plundered of its movable assets.

How difficult it was for Classical man to figure to himself the transformation of a physically indefinable asset like land into bodily money is shown by the stone posts

(ὅροι) on land in Greece, which were meant to *represent* the mortgages on it, and by the Roman method of sale *per æs et libram*, in which a clod of earth was handed over for a coin in the presence of witnesses. Consequently, trade in goods (properly so called) never existed; nor did anything like, for example, a current price for arable land. A regular relation between land-value and money-value was as unthinkable to the Classical mind as such a relation between artistic value and money-value. Intellectual — i.e., incorporeal — products like dramas and frescoes possessed economically no value at all.

In the light of this we begin to understand certain phenomena such as the mass-execution of the wealthy under the Second Tyrannis; and the Roman proscriptions, with the object of seizing a large part of the cash current in the community; and the melting down of the Delphian temple-treasure by the Phocians in the Sacred War, of the art-treasures of Corinth by Mummius, and of the last votive offerings in Rome by Cæsar, in Greece by Sulla, in Asia Minor by Brutus and Cassius; — without regard to artistic value when the noble stuffs and metals and ivory were needed.

Not very much can have been left of Classical art-treasures even by Augustus's time. The refined Athenians themselves thought far too unhistorically to be moved to spare a chryselephantine statue merely because it was the work of Phidias. It is worth remembering that the gold parts of the famous Athene-figure of the Parthenon cella were made removable and tested for weight from time to time. Economic use of them, therefore, was provided for from the outset.

The captured statues and the vessels borne in the tri-

umphs were, in the eyes of the spectators, sheer cash. And Mommsen could attempt to determine the site of Varus's disaster by the places in which coin-hoards were unearthed — for the Roman veteran carried his whole property in precious metal on his person. Classical wealth does not consist in having possessions, but piling money. A Classical money-market was not a centre of credit like the bourses of our world and of ancient Thebes, but a city in which an important part of the world's cash was actually collected. It may be taken that in Cæsar's time much more than half of the Classical world's gold was in Rome.

About Hannibal's time, this world advanced into the state of unlimited plutocracy. The naturally limited mass of precious metals and materially valuable works of art in its sphere of control became hopelessly inadequate to cover needs. A veritable craving set in for new bodies capable of being used as money. Then it was that men's eyes fell upon the slave, who was another sort of body — but a thing and not a person and capable, therefore, of being thought of as money.

From that point Classical slavery became unique of its kind in all economic history. The properties of the coin were extended to apply to living objects; and the stock of men, in the regions "opened up" to the plunderings of proconsuls and tax-farmers, became as interesting as the stock of metal. A curious sort of double valuation developed. The slave had a market price, although ground and soil had not. He served for the accumulation of great uninvested fortunes. Hence the enormous slave-masses of the Roman period, which are entirely inexplicable by any other sort of necessity. So long as man needed only as many slaves as he could gainfully employ, their number

was small and easily covered by the prisoners of war and judgment-debtors. The belief that slaves ever constituted, in Athens or Ægina, as much as a third of the population is a complete delusion. On the contrary, the revolutions of the period after 400 presuppose an enormous surplus of free paupers.

It was in the sixth century that Chios made a beginning with the importation of bought slaves (Argyronetes). As the Classical economy was static and not dynamic, and was ignorant of the systematic opening-up of energy-sources, the slaves of the Roman age did not exist to be exploited in work, but were employed – more or less – so that the greatest possible number of them could be maintained. Specially presentable slaves, possessing particular qualifications of one sort or another, were preferred, because for equal cost of maintenance they represented a better asset. They were loaned as cash was loaned. And they were allowed to have businesses on their account, so that they could become rich. Free labour was undersold – all this so as to cover at any rate the upkeep of this capital.[1]

The bulk of them cannot have been employed at all. They answered their purpose by simply existing, as a stock of money in hand which was not bound up to a natural limit like the stock of metal available in those days. And through that very fact, the need of slaves grew and grew

[1] Herein lies the difference between this slavery and the sugar-slavery of our own Baroque Period. The latter represents a threshold phase of our *machine industry*, an organization of "living" energy, which began with man-fuel, but presently passed over to coal-fuel. Slavery came to be considered immoral only when coal had established itself. Looked at from this angle, the victory of the North in the American Civil War (1865) meant the economic victory of the concentrated energy of coal over the simple energy of the muscles. O.S.

indefinitely. It led, not only to wars that were undertaken simply for slave-getting, but to slave-hunting by private entrepreneurs all along the Mediterranean coasts (which Rome winked at); and to a new way of making the proconsuls' fortunes, which consisted in bleeding the population of a region and then selling it into slavery for debt.

The market of Delos must have dealt with ten thousand slaves a day. When Cæsar went to Britain, the disappointment caused in Rome by the money-poverty of the Britons was compensated by the prospect of rich booty in slaves. When Corinth was destroyed, the melting-down of the statues for coinage, and the auctioning of the inhabitants at the slave-mart were, for Classical minds, one and the same operation – the transformation of corporeal objects into money.

In extremest contrast to this stands the symbol of our Faustian money – money as Function, the value of which lies in its effect, and not its mere existence. The specific style of this economic thinking appears already in the way in which the Normans of A.D. 1000 organized their spoils of men and land into an economic force. Compare the pure book-valuation of these ducal officials (commemorated in our words "cheque," "account," and "checking") with the "contemporary" gold talent of the Iliad. One meets at the very outset of the Culture the rudiments of its modern credit-system, which is the outcome of confidence in the force and durability of its economic mode, and with which the idea of money in our sense is almost identical. These financial methods, transplanted to the Roman Kingdom of Sicily by Roger II, were developed by the Hohenstaufen Emperor Frederick II (about 1230) into a powerful system far surpassing the original in dy-

namism, and making him the " first capitalist power of the world." This fraternization of mathematical thinking-power and royal will-to-power made its way from Normandy into France, and was applied on the grand scale to the exploitation of conquered England — to this day English soil is nominally royal demesne. Its Sicilian side was imitated by the Italian city-republics; and as their ruling patricians soon took the methods of the civic economy into use for their private book-keeping, it spread over the commercial thought and practice of the whole Western world. Little later, the Sicilian methods were adopted by the Order of the Teutonic Knights and by the dynasty of Aragon. It is probably to these origins that we should assign the model accountancy of Spain in the days of Phillip II, and of Prussia in those of Frederick William I.

The decisive event, however, was the invention of double-entry book-keeping by Fra Luca Pacioli in 1494. Goethe calls this in *Wilhelm Meister* " one of the finest discoveries of the human intellect." And indeed its author may without hesitation be ranked with his contemporaries Columbus and Copernicus. To the Normans we owe our modes of reckoning, and to the Lombards our book-keeping.

Double-entry book-keeping is a pure Analysis of the space of values, referred to a co-ordinate system, of which the origin is the " Firm." The coinage of the Classical world had only permitted of arithmetical compilations with value-*magnitudes.*

Our economy-world is ordered by *force and mass.* A field of money-tensions lies in space and assigns to every object, irrespective of its specific kind, a positive or negative effect-value, which is represented by a book-entry.

There is a close relation between our picture of the nature of electricity and the process of the " clearing-house," in which the positive and negative money-positions of several firms (centres of tension) are equated amongst themselves by a purely mental act and the true position made presentable by a booking.

The symbol of the functional money thus imagined, that which *alone* may be compared with the Classical coin, is not the actual book-entry, nor yet the share-voucher, cheque, or note, *but the act by which the function is fulfilled in writing*. The rôle of the value-paper is merely to be the *generalized historical evidence* of this act.

Yet side by side with this the West, in its unquestioning admiration of the Classical, has gone on striking coins — not merely as tokens of sovereignty, but in the belief that this evidenced money was money corresponding in reality to the economics in thought. In just the same way, even within the Gothic age, we took over Roman law with its equating of things to bodily magnitudes, and the Euclidean mathematic, which was built upon the concept of number as magnitude. And so it befell that the evolutions of these three intellectual form-worlds of ours proceeded, not like the Faustian music in a pure and flowerlike unfolding, but in the shape of a *progressive emancipation from the notion of magnitude*.

Our mathematic had already achieved this by the close of the Baroque age. Our jurisprudence, on the other hand, has not yet recognized its coming task. But this century is going to set it, and to demand that which for Roman jurists was the self-evident basis of law — namely, the inward congruence of economic and legal thought, and an equal practical familiarity with both.

The conception of money that was symbolized in the coin agreed precisely with the Classical thing-law. But with us there is nothing remotely like such an agreement. Our whole life is disposed dynamically, not statically and Stoically. Therefore our essentials are forces and performances, relations and capacities – organizing talents and intuitive intellects, credit, ideas, methods, energy-sources – and not mere existence of corporeal things.

The " Romanist " thing-thought of our jurists, and the theory of money that consciously or unconsciously starts from the coin, are equally alien to our life. The vast metallic hoard to which, in imitation of the Classical, we were continually adding till the World War came, has indeed made a rôle for itself off the main road. But with the inner form, tasks, and aims of modern economy it has *nothing* to do; and if as the result of the war it were to disappear from currency altogether, nothing would be altered thereby.

In our Culture the credit of a country rests upon its economic capacity and the political organization thereof. This imparts to the operations and bookings of finance the character of real money-creations – and not on any quantity of gold that may be put into this or that. It is the Classicist superstition that raises the gold reserve to the status of an actual measure of credit – actual in that the level of credit is thereby made dependent, not upon " will," but upon " can." But the current coins are *wares*, which, relatively to national credit, possess a *price*. The poorer the credit, the higher the price of gold – so that thenceforth it can only be upheld against that of *other* wares. Thus gold is measured like other wares against the unit of book-reckoning, and not vice versa as the term

" gold standard " suggests. It serves also as means of payment in minor transactions, as for that matter a postage-stamp does. In old Egypt (whose money-thought is astoundingly like the Western) there was nothing resembling the coin even under the New Empire. The written transfer was entirely sufficient; and the Classical coins, that filtered in from 650 to the founding of Alexandria and the Hellenistic régime, were usually cut to pieces and reckoned by weight as a ware.

We live in a world of economic dynamism, where the works of the individual are not additive in the Euclidean way, but functionally related to one another. The purely executive work (which alone Marx takes into account) is in reality nothing but the function of an inventive, ordering, and organizing work. It is from this that the other derives its meaning, relative value, and even possibility of being done at all.

The whole world-economy since the discovery of the steam-engine has been the creation of a quite small number of superior heads, without whose high-grade work everything else would never have come into being. This achievement is of creative thinking, not a quantum. Its value is not to be weighed against a certain number of coins. Rather it *is* itself money — Faustian money, namely, which is not minted, but *thought of as an efficient centre* coming up out of a life — and it is the inward quality of that life which elevates the thought to the significance of a fact.

Thinking in money generates money — that is the secret of the world-economy. When an organizing magnate writes down a million on paper, that million exists, for the personality as an economic centre vouches for a corre-

sponding heightening of the economic energy of his field. This, and nothing else, is the meaning of the word " Credit " for us.

But all the gold pieces in the world would not suffice to invest the actions of the manual worker with a meaning, and therefore a value. If the famous " expropriation of the expropriators " were to eliminate the superior capacities from their creations, these would become soulless, will-less, empty shells.

Thus, in fact, Marx is just as much a Classical, just as truly a product of the Romanist law-thought, as Adam Smith; he sees only the completed magnitude, not the function. He would like to separate the means of production from those whose minds – by the discovery of methods, the organization of efficient industries, and the acquisition of outlet-markets – alone turn a mass of bricks and steel into a factory; things which, if their forces find no field of play, do not occur.

All this equally holds good for the case of " workers " taking over the leadership of the works. Either they are incapable of management, and the business collapses, or they are capable of something, and then they themselves become inwardly entrepreneurs and think thenceforward only of maintaining their power. No theory can eliminate this fact from the world, for so life *is*.

There are subjects and objects in every kind of life as lived; and the more important, the more rich in form, the life is, the clearer the distinction between them. Every stream of Being consists of a minority of leaders and a huge majority of led. So *every sort of economy consists in leader-work and executive work*. The spirit of this world of work can be grasped only through a grasp of its high-

est possibilities. The inventor of the steam-engine and not its stoker is the determinant. The *thought* is what matters.

And, similarly, thinking in money has subjects and objects. There are those who by force of their personality generate and guide money, and those who are maintained by money. Money of the Faustian brand is the *force* distilled from economy-dynamics of the Faustian brand. The individual (on the economic side of his life-destiny) is either inwardly constituted to represent a part of this force, or is nothing but mass to it.

The word " Capital " signifies the centre of this thought – not the aggregate of values, but that which *keeps them in movement as such*. Capitalism comes into existence only with the world-city existence of a Civilization. It is confined to the very small ring of those who represent this existence by their persons and intelligence. Its opposite is the provincial economy.

It was the unconditional supremacy achieved by the coin in Classical life (including the political side of that life) that generated the static capital, which by its existence drew to itself, in a sort of magnetic attraction, things and again things *en masse*. It was the supremacy of book-values – whose abstract system was quickly detached from personality by double-entry book-keeping and worked forward by virtue of its own inward dynamism – that produced the modern capital which spans the whole earth with its field of force.

Thus it is only since 1770 that the banks have become centres of an economic power which made its first intervention with politics at the Congress of Vienna. Till then

the banker had in the main concerned himself with bill business. The Chinese, and even the Egyptian, banks had a different significance, and the Classical banks, even in the Rome of Cæsar's day, may best be described as cash-tills. They collected the yield of taxes in cash, and lent cash against replacement; thus the temples, with their stock of precious metal in the form of votive offerings, became "banks." The temple of Delos, through several centuries, lent at ten per cent.

Under the influence of its own sort of capital, the economic life of the Classical world took the form of a gold-stream that flowed from the provinces to Rome and back, and was ever seeking new areas whose stock of worked-up gold had not yet been "opened up." Brutus and Cassius carried the gold of Asia Minor on long mule-trains to the battle-field of Philippi – one can imagine what sort of an economic operation the plunder of a camp after a battle must have been. And even C. Gracchus, almost a century earlier, alluded to the amphoræ that went out from Rome to the provinces full of wine and came back full of gold. This hunt for the gold possessions of alien peoples corresponds exactly to the present-day hunt for coal, which in its deeper meaning is not a thing, but a store of energy.

But, equally, the Classical craving for the near and present could not but match the Polis-ideal with an *economic ideal of Autarkeia*, an economic atomization corresponding to the political. Each of these tiny life-units desired to have an economic stream wholly of its own, wholly self-contained, circling independently of all others and *within the radius of visibility*.

The polar opposite of this is the Western notion of the *Firm*. It is thought of as an entirely impersonal and incor-

poreal centre of force, from which activity streams out in all directions to an indefinite distance. The proprietor, by his ability to think in money, does not *represent* it, but *possesses and directs* – that is, has it in his power – like a little cosmos. The duality of firm and proprietor would have been utterly unimaginable for the Classical mind.

Organization was completely absent even as an idea from Classical man. His finance was one of provisional expedients made rule and habit. Sources of income were thought of only when the need of income presented itself, and then drawn upon, without any regard for the future, as the moment required – even at the cost of entirely destroying them. Plunder of the treasures of one's own temples; sea-piracy against one's own city; confiscation of the wealth of one's own fellow-citizens; were everyday methods of finance. If surpluses were available, they were distributed to the citizens – a proceeding to which plenty of people besides Eubulus of Athens owed their popularity. Budgets were as unknown as any other part of financial policy. The "economic management" of Roman provinces was a system of robbery, public and private, practised by senators and financiers without the slightest consideration as to whether the exported values could be replaced.

Never did Classical man think of systematically intensifying his economic life, but ever looked to the result of the moment, the tangible quantum of cash. Imperial Rome would have gone down in ruin had it not been fortunate enough to possess in old Egypt a Civilization that had for a thousand years thought of *nothing* but the organization of its economy. The Roman neither comprehended nor was capable of copying this style of life.

The accident that Egypt provided the political possessor of this fellah-world with an inexhaustible source of gold rendered it unnecessary for him to make a *settled habit* of proscription at home. The last of these financial operations in massacre-form was that of 43, shortly before the incorporation of Egypt. The amassed gold of Asia Minor that Brutus and Cassius were then bringing up, which meant an army and the dominion of the world, made it necessary to put to the ban some two thousand of the richest inhabitants of Italy, whose heads were brought to the Forum in sacks for the offered rewards. It was no longer possible to spare even relatives, children, and grey-heads, or people who had never concerned themselves with politics. It was enough that they possessed a stock of cash, and that the yield would otherwise have been too small.

But with the extinction of the Classical world-feeling in the early Imperial age, this mode of thinking in money disappeared also. *Coins again became wares* — because men were again living the peasant life. This explains the immense outflow of gold into the farther East after Hadrian's reign, which has hitherto been unaccountable.

And as economic life in forms of gold-streams was extinguished in the upheaval of a younger Culture, so also the slave ceased to be money; and the ebb of the gold was paralleled by mass-emancipation of the slaves. Numerous Imperial laws, from Augustus's reign onwards, tried in vain to check this — until under Diocletian, in whose famous maximum tariff money-economy was no longer the standpoint, the type of the Classical slave had ceased to exist.

It need hardly be said that Classical man, who felt himself and his environment alike Euclidean, set himself *a priori* in hostile opposition to the very idea of technique. If by " Classical " technique we mean something that rose with determined effort above the universal dead perfection of the Mycenæan age, then there was no Classical technique. Its triremes were glorified row-boats; its catapults and onagers mere substitutes for arms and fists — not to be named in the same breath with the war-engines of Assyria and China. And as for Hero and his like, it was flukes and not discoveries that they achieved. They lacked the inner weight, the fatedness of their moment, the deep necessity. Here and there men played with data (and why not?) that probably came from the East. But no one devoted serious attention to them and, above all, no one made a real effort to introduce them into the ensemble-picture of life.

Very different is the Faustian technics, which with all its passion of the third dimension, from earliest Gothic days, thrusts itself upon Nature with the firm resolve to *be its master*. Here, and only here, is the connection of insight and utilization a matter of course. Theory is working hypothesis from the outset.

The Faustian inventor and discoverer is a unique type. The primitive force of his will, the brilliance of his visions, the steely energy of his practical ponderings, must appear queer and incomprehensible to anyone at the standpoint of another Culture; but for us they are in the blood. Our whole Culture has a discoverer's soul. To *dis*-cover that which is not seen, to draw it into the light-world of the inner eye so as to master it — that was its stubborn passion

from the first days on. All its great inventions slowly ripened in the deeps, to emerge at last with the necessity of a Destiny. All of them were very nearly approached by the high-hearted, happy research of the early Gothic monks. Here, if anywhere, the religious origins of all technical thought are manifested. These meditative discoverers in their cells, who with prayers and fastings *wrung* God's secret out of him, felt that they were *serving* God thereby. Here is the Faust-figure, the grand symbol of a true discovering Culture.

Simultaneously with Rationalism, the discovery of the steam-engine upset everything and transformed economic life from the foundations up. Till then nature had rendered services. But now she was tied to the yoke as *a slave*, and her work was as though in contempt measured by a standard of horse-power. We advanced from the muscle-force of the Negro, which was set to work in organized routines, to the organic reserves of the Earth's crust, where the life-forces of millennia lay stored as coal. And today we cast our eyes on inorganic nature, where water-forces are already being brought in to supplement coal. As the horse-powers run to millions and milliards, the numbers of the population increase and increase, on a scale that no other Culture ever thought possible.

This growth is a *product of the Machine*, which insists on being used and directed, and to that end centuples the forces of each individual. For the sake of the machine, human life becomes precious. *Work* becomes the great word of ethical thinking; in the eighteenth century it loses its derogatory implication in all languages. The machine works and forces the man to co-operate. The entire Cul-

ture reaches a degree of activity such that the earth trembles under it.

And what now develops, in the space of hardly a century, is a drama of such greatness that the men of a future Culture, with other soul and other passions, will hardly be able to resist the conviction that "in those days" nature herself was tottering. The politics stride over cities and peoples. Even the economics, deeply as they bite into the destinies of the plant and animal worlds, merely touch the fringe of life and efface themselves. But this machine technique will leave traces of its heyday behind it when all else is lost and forgotten. For this Faustian passion has altered the Face of the Earth.

This is the outward- and upward-straining life-feeling — true descendant, therefore, of the Gothic — as expressed in Goethe's Faust monologue, when the steam-engine was yet young. The intoxicated soul wills to fly above space and Time. An ineffable longing tempts him to indefinable horizons. Man would free himself from the earth, rise into the infinite, leave the bonds of the body, and circle in the universe of space amongst the stars.

That which the glowing and soaring inwardness of St. Bernard sought at the beginning, that which Grünewald and Rembrandt conceived in their backgrounds, and Beethoven in the trans-earthly tones of his last quartets, comes back now in the intellectual intoxication of the inventions that crowd one upon another. Hence the fantastic traffic that crosses the continents in a few days, that puts itself across oceans in floating cities, that bores through mountains, rushes about in subterranean labyrinths, uses the steam-engine till its last possibilities have

been exhausted; and then passes on to the gas-engine; and finally raises itself above the roads and railways and flies in the air. Hence it is that the spoken word is sent in one moment over all the oceans. Hence comes the ambition to break all records and beat all dimensions: to build giant halls for giant machines, vast ships and bridge-spans, buildings that deliriously scrape the clouds, fabulous forces pressed together to a focus to obey the hand of a child, stamping and quivering and droning works of steel and glass in which tiny man moves as unlimited monarch and, at the last, feels nature as beneath him.

These machines become in their form less and ever less human, more ascetic, mystic, esoteric. They weave the earth over with an infinite web of subtle forces, currents, and tensions. Their bodies become ever more and more immaterial, ever less noisy. The wheels, rollers, and levers are vocal no more. All that matters withdraws itself into the interior.

Man has felt the machine to be devilish, and rightly. It signifies in the eyes of the believer the deposition of God. It delivers sacred Causality over to man; and by him, with a sort of foreseeing omniscience, it is set in motion, silent and irresistible.

Never save here has a microcosm felt itself superior to its macrocosm. But here the little life-units have by the sheer force of their intellect made the unliving dependent upon themselves. It is a triumph, so far as we can see, unparalleled. Only this our Culture has achieved it, and perhaps only for a few centuries.

But for that very reason Faustian man has become *the slave of his creation.* His number, and the arrangement of life as he lives it, have been driven by the machine on to

a path where there is no standing still and no turning back. The peasant, the hand-worker, even the merchant, appear suddenly as inessential in comparison with the *three great figures that the Machine has bred and trained up in the cause of its development: the entrepreneur, the engineer, and the factory-worker.*

Out of a quite small branch of manual work — namely, the preparation-economy — there has grown up (*in this one Culture alone*) a mighty tree that casts its shadow over all the other vocations — namely, *the economy of the machine-industry*. It forces the entrepreneur not less than the workman to obedience. *Both* become slaves, and not masters, of the machine, that now for the first time develops its devilish and occult power. The Socialistic theory of the present day has insisted upon looking only at the workman's contribution and has claimed the word " work " for him alone. But it has all become possible only through the sovereign and decisive achievement of the entrepreneur.

Marx is quite right; this is one of the creations — the proudest creation — of the bourgeoisie. But he has failed to note that it is only the bourgeoisie of this one single Culture that is master of the destiny of the Machine.

So long as it dominates the earth, every non-European tries and will try to fathom the secret of this terrible weapon. Nevertheless, inwardly he abhors it, be he Indian or Japanese, Russian or Arab. It is something fundamental in the essence of the Magian soul that leads the Jew, as entrepreneur and engineer, to stand aside from the creation proper of machines and devote himself to the business side of their production. But so also the Russian looks with fear and hatred at this tyranny of wheels, cables, and

rails. And if he adapts himself for today and tomorrow to the inevitable, yet there will come a time when he will *blot out the whole thing from his memory and his environment*, and he will create about himself a wholly new world, in which nothing of this Devil's technique will be left.

The centre of this artificial and complicated realm of the Machine is the organizer and manager. The mind, not the hand, holds it together.

But, for that very reason, to preserve the ever endangered structure, *one* figure is even more important than all the energy of enterprising master-men that make cities to grow out of the ground and alter the picture of the landscape. It is a figure that is apt to be forgotten in this conflict of politics – the *engineer*, the priest of the machine, the man who knows it. Not merely the importance, but the very existence of the industry depends upon the existence of the hundred thousand talented, rigorously schooled brains that command the technique and develop it onward and onward.

The quiet engineer it is who is the machine's master and destiny. His thought is as possibility what the machine is as actuality. There have been fears, thoroughly materialistic fears, of the exhaustion of the coal-fields. But so long as there are worthy technical path-finders, dangers of this sort have no existence. When, and only when, the crop of recruits for this army fails – this army whose thought-work forms one inward unit with the work of the machine – the industry must flicker out in spite of all that managerial energy and the workers can do.

Suppose that, in future generations, the most gifted minds were to find their soul's health more important than

all the powers of this world. Suppose that, under the influence of the metaphysic and mysticism that is taking the place of rationalism today, the very élite of intellect that is now concerned with the machine comes to be overpowered by a growing sense of its *Satanism* (it is the step from Roger Bacon to Bernard of Clairvaux) — then nothing can hinder the end of this grand drama that has been a play of intellects, with hands as mere auxiliaries.

The Western industry has diverted the ancient traditions of the other Cultures. The streams of economic life move towards the seats of King Coal and the great regions of raw material. Nature becomes exhausted, the globe sacrificed to Faustian thinking in energies. The *working* earth is the Faustian aspect of her, the aspect contemplated by the Faust of Part II, the supreme transfiguration of enterprising work. And contemplating, he dies.

Titanic is the onslaught of money upon this intellectual force. Industry, too, is earth-bound like the yeoman. It has its station, and its materials stream up out of the earth. Only high finance is *wholly* free, wholly intangible. Since 1789 the banks, and with them the bourses, have developed themselves on the credit-needs of an industry growing ever more enormous, as a power on their own account, and they will (as money wills in every Civilization) to be the only power. The ancient wrestle between the productive and the acquisitive economies intensifies now into a silent gigantomachy of intellects, fought out in the lists of the world-cities. This battle is the despairing struggle of technical thought to maintain its liberty against money-thought. The dictature of money marches on, tending to its material peak, in the Faustian Civilization as in every other.

And now something happens that is intelligible only to one who has penetrated to the essence of money. If it were anything tangible, then its existence would be for ever. But, as it is a form of thought, *it fades out as soon as it has thought its economic world to finality*, and has no more material upon which to feed.

It thrust into the life of the yeoman's countryside and set the earth a-moving; its thought transformed every sort of handicraft; today it presses victoriously upon industry to make the productive work of entrepreneur and engineer and labourer alike its spoils. The machine with its human retinue, the real queen of this century, is in danger of succumbing to a stronger power.

But with this, money, too, is at the end of its success. And the last conflict is at hand in which the Civilization receives its conclusive form — the conflict *between* money and blood.

The coming of Cæsarism breaks the dictature of money and its political weapon democracy. After a long triumph of world-city economy and its interests over political creative force, the political side of life manifests itself after all as the stronger of the two. The sword is victorious over the money, the master-will subdues again the plunderer-will.

We call these money-powers "Capitalism." In this sense the interest-politics of the workers' movements also belong to it, in that their object is not to overcome the money-values, but to possess them. We may designate as Socialism the will to call into life a mighty politico-economic order that transcends all class interests — a system of *lofty* thoughtfulness and duty-sense, that keeps the whole in fine condition for the decisive battle of its his-

tory. And this battle is also the battle of money and law.

The *private* powers of the economy want free paths for their acquisition of great resources. No legislation must stand in their way. They want to make the laws themselves, in their interests. And to that end they make use of the tool they have made for themselves: democracy, the subsidized party.

Law needs, in order to resist this onslaught, a high tradition and an ambition of strong families that finds its satisfaction not in the heaping-up of riches, but in the tasks of true rulerships, above and beyond all money-advantage. *A power can be overthrown only by another power*, not by a principle. And no power that can confront money is left but this one.

Money is overthrown and abolished only by blood. *Life* is alpha and omega, the cosmic onflow in microcosmic form. It is *the* fact of facts within the world-as-history. Before the irresistible rhythm of the generation-sequence, everything built up by the waking-consciousness in its intellectual world vanishes at the last. Ever in History it is life and life only – race-quality, the triumph of the will-to-power – and not the victory of truths, discoveries, or money that signifies.

World-history is the world court. It has ever decided in favour of the stronger, fuller, and more self-assured life – decreed to it the right to exist, regardless of whether its right would hold before a tribunal of waking-consciousness. Always it has sacrificed truth and justice to might and race, and passed doom of death upon men and peoples in whom truth was more than deeds, and justice than power.

And so the drama of a high Culture – that wondrous world of deities, arts, thoughts, battles, cities – closes with the return of the pristine facts of the blood eternal, that is one and the same as the ever-circling cosmic flow.

PART II

THE SPENGLERIAN THEORY OF HISTORY

CHAPTER I

HOW TO VIEW OUR WORLD

> "*Up to now everyone has been at liberty to hope what he pleased about the future. But henceforward it will be every man's business to inform himself of what* can *happen, and therefore of what* will *happen – with the unalterable necessity of destiny, and irrespective of personal ideals, hopes or desires.*"

THANKS to the subdivision of history into "Ancient," "Mediæval" and "Modern" – an incredibly jejune and *meaningless* scheme – we have failed to perceive the true position, in the general history of higher mankind, of the little part-world which has developed on West-European soil from the time of the German-Roman Empire.

Here the historian is gravely influenced by preconceptions derived from geography, which assumes a *Continent* of Europe. The word "Europe" ought to be struck out of history. There is historically no "European" type.

The most appropriate designation for this current West-European scheme of history, in which the great Cul-

tures are made to follow orbits round *us* as the presumed centre of all world-happenings, is the *Ptolemaic system* of history. The system put forward in this work I regard as the *Copernican discovery* in the historical sphere. It admits no sort of privileged position to the Classical or the Western Culture as against the Cultures of India, Babylon, China, Egypt, the Arabs, Mexico – separate worlds of dynamic being.

We know it to be true of every organism that the rhythm, form and duration of its life, and all the expression-details of that life as well, are determined by the *properties of its species.*

No one, looking at the oak, with its millennial life, dare say that it is at this moment, now, about to start on its true and proper course. No one as he sees a caterpillar grow day by day expects that it will go on doing so for two or three years. In these cases we feel, with an unqualified certainty, a *limit;* and this sense of the limit is identical with our sense of the inward form.

In the case of human history, on the contrary, we take our ideas as to the course of the future from an unbridled optimism that sets at naught all historical, *organic*, experience. Everyone therefore sets himself to discover, in the accidental present, terms that he can expand into some striking progression-series – the existence of which rests not on scientific proof but on predilection. He works upon unlimited possibilities – never a natural end – and from the momentary top-course of his bricks plans artlessly the continuation of his structure.

I see, in place of that empty figment of *one* linear history, the drama of *a number* of mighty Cultures, each springing with primitive strength from the soil of a

mother-region to which it remains firmly bound throughout its whole life-cycle; each stamping its material, its mankind, in *its own* image; each having *its own* idea, *its own* passions, *its own* life, will and feeling, *its own* death.

Each Culture has its own possibilities of self-expression which arise, ripen, decay, and never return. There is not *one* sculpture, *one* painting, *one* mathematics, *one* physics, but many. Each is in its deepest essence different from the others, each limited in duration and self-contained, just as each species of plant has its peculiar blossom or fruit, its special type of growth and decline.

I see world-history as a picture of endless formations and transformations, of the marvellous waxing and waning of organic forms.

Here we shall develop the form-language of human history, its periodic structure, its *organic logic* out of the profusion of all the challenging details. In other aspects, mankind is habitually, and rightly, reckoned as one of the organisms of the earth's surface. Its physical structure, its natural functions, the whole phenomenal conception of it, all belong to a comprehensive unity. Only in *this* aspect is it treated otherwise, despite the similarity of human history to the history of any other of the higher life-groups.

Bring analogy to bear. Let the world of human Cultures intimately and unreservedly work upon the imagination, instead of forcing it into a ready-made scheme. Let the words youth, growth, maturity, decay – hitherto used to express subjective valuations in sociology, ethics and æsthetics – be taken as objective descriptions of organic states. Set forth the Classical Culture as a self-contained phenomenon embodying and expressing the Classical soul. Put it beside the Egyptian, the Indian, the Babylonian, the

Chinese and the Western. Determine for each of these higher individuals what is typical in their surgings, and what is necessary in the riot of incident. Then at last will unfold itself the picture of world-history that is natural to us, men of the West, and to us alone.

Our narrower task is primarily to determine, from such a world-survey, the state of West Europe and America as at the epoch of 1800–2000. It is to establish the chronological position of this period in the ensemble of Western culture-history, and its significance as a chapter that is necessarily found in the biography of every Culture in one or other guise.

Considered in the spirit of analogy, this period appears as chronologically parallel – " contemporary " in our special sense – with the phase of Hellenism. Its culmination, marked by the World War, corresponds with the transition from the Hellenistic to the Roman age. *Rome*, with its rigorous realism – uninspired, barbaric, disciplined, practical, Protestant, *Prussian* – will always give us, working as we must by analogies, the key to understanding our own future.

The *break of destiny that we express by hyphening the words " Greeks-Romans " is occurring for us also, separating that which is already fulfilled from that which is to come.* Long ago we should have seen in the " Classical " world a development which is the complete counterpart of our own Western development – differing indeed in every detail of the surface, but entirely similar as regards the inward power driving the great organism towards its end. We might have found the constant *alter ego* of our own actuality in establishing the correspondence, item by item, of the " Trojan War " and the Crusades; of Homer

and the Nibelungenlied; of Doric and Gothic; of Dionysian movement and Renaissance; of Polycletus and John Sebastian Bach; of Athens and Paris; of Aristotle and Kant; of Alexander and Napoleon; of the world-city and the imperialism common to both Cultures.

This requires an interpretation of the picture of Classical history very different from the incredibly one-sided, superficial picture that we have given to it. We have, in truth, been too conscious of our near relation to the Classical Age, too prone in consequence to unconsidered assertion of it. Superficial similarity is a great snare. Our entire Classical study fell a victim to it. That close inward relation in which we conceive ourselves to stand towards the Classical is a venerable prejudice.

Our views of the Græco-Roman Culture have always swung between two extremes. One group, public men before all else, opine that "present-day mankind" is making excellent progress, assess it and its performances at the very highest value and measure everything earlier by its standards. On the other hand we have the group of artists, poets, philologists and philosophers; these feel themselves to be out of their element in the aforesaid present, and in consequence choose for themselves, in this or that past epoch, a standpoint just as absolute and dogmatic from which to condemn "today." The one group looks upon Greece as a "not yet," the other upon modernity as a "nevermore." Both labour under the obsession of a scheme of history which treats the two epochs as part of the same straight line.

Neither group has attained to that higher method of treatment which reduces this opposition of criteria to ashes, although it was within their power to do so.

What is Civilization, understood as the organic-logical sequel, fulfilment and finale of a culture?

Every Culture has *its own* Civilization. In this work, for the first time, the two words are used in a *periodic* sense, to express a strict and necessary *organic succession.* The Civilization is the inevitable *destiny* of the Culture. Civilizations are the most external and artificial states of which a species of developed humanity is capable. They are a conclusion, the thing-become succeeding the thing-becoming. They are an end, irrevocable, yet by inward necessity reached again and again.

The transition from Culture to Civilization was accomplished for the Classical world in the 4th, for the Western in the 19th century. From these periods onward the great intellectual decisions take place in three or four world-cities that have absorbed into themselves the whole content of History. The old wide landscape of the Culture, become merely provincial, serves only to feed the cities with what remains of its higher mankind.

World-city and province – the two basic ideas of every civilization – bring up a wholly new form-problem of History. It is the very problem that we are living through today with hardly the remotest conception of its immensity. In place of a world, there is a *city, a point,* in which the whole life of broad regions is collecting, while the rest dries up. In place of a type-true people, born of and grown on the soil, there is a new sort of nomad, cohering unstably in fluid masses, the parasitical city dweller – traditionless, utterly matter-of-fact, religionless, clever, unfruitful, deeply contemptuous of the countryman and especially that highest form of countryman, the country gentleman.

This is a great stride towards the inorganic, towards the end. France and England have already taken the step and Germany is beginning to do so. After Syracuse, Athens, and Alexandria comes Rome. After Madrid, Paris, London come Berlin and New York. It is the destiny of whole regions that lie outside the radiation-circle of one of these cities — of old Crete and Macedon, and today of the Scandinavian North — to become "provinces." Culture-cities like Florence, Nürnberg, Salamanca, Bruges and Prag, have become provincial towns and fight inwardly a lost battle against the world-cities.

It was in the conception of *money* as an inorganic and abstract magnitude, entirely disconnected from the notion of the fruitful earth and the primitive values, that the Romans had the advantage of the Greeks. Thenceforward any high ideal of life becomes largely a question of money. Unlike the Greek stoicism of Chrysippus, the Roman stoicism of Cato and Seneca presupposes a private income. Unlike that of the 18th century, the social-ethical sentiment of the 20th — if it is to be realized at a higher level than that of professional (and lucrative) agitation — is a matter for millionaires.

To the world-city belongs not a folk but a mass. Its uncomprehending hostility to all the traditions representative of the Culture — to nobility, church, privileges, dynasties, convention in art and limits of knowledge in science; the keen and cold intelligence that confounds the wisdom of the peasant; the new-fashioned naturalism that in relation to all matters of sex and society goes back far beyond Rousseau and Socrates, to quite primitive instincts and conditions; the reappearance of the *panis et circenses* in the form of wage-disputes and football-grounds — all

these betoken the definite closing-down of the Culture, and the opening of a quite new phase of human existence – anti-provincial, late, futureless, but quite inevitable.

This is what has to be *viewed* – and viewed not with the eyes of the partisan, the ideologue, the up-to-date novelist; not from this or that "standpoint"; but in a high, time-free perspective, embracing whole millenniums of historical world-forms – if we are really to comprehend the great crisis of the present.

That the Romans did *not* conquer the world is certain. They merely took possession of a booty that lay open to everyone. The *Imperium Romanum* came into existence not as the result of such an extremity of military and financial effort as had characterized the Punic Wars, but because the old East forwent all external self-determinations. We must not be deluded by the appearance of brilliant military successes. With a few ill-trained, ill-led, and sullen legions, Lucullus and Pompey conquered whole realms. After Zama, the Romans never again either waged or were capable of waging a war against a great military Power. The conquest of Gaul by Cæsar was frankly a colonial, i.e., a one-sided, war; and the fact that it is the highest achievement in the later military history of Rome only shows that the well of real achievement was rapidly drying up. The Romans' classic wars were those against the Samnites, Pyrrhus and Carthage. Their grand hour was Cannæ. To maintain the heroic posture for centuries on end is beyond the power of any people. The Prussian-German people have had three great moments – 1813, 1870 and 1914 – and that is more than others have had.

Here, then, I lay it down that *Imperialism* is to be taken as the typical symbol of the passing away. Its petrifacts such as the Egyptian empire, the Roman, the Chinese, the Indian, may continue to exist for hundreds or thousands of years. But they are dead bodies, amorphous and dispirited masses of men, scrap-material from a great history. Imperialism is Civilization unadulterated.

In this phenomenal form the destiny of the West is now irrevocably set.

It is not a matter of choice – it is not the conscious will of individuals, or even that of whole classes or peoples that decides. The expansive tendency is a doom, something dæmonic and immense, which grips, forces into service, and uses up the late mankind of the world-city stage, willy-nilly, aware or unaware.

The modern Germans are a conspicuous example of a people that has become expansive without knowing it or willing it. They were already in that state while they still believed themselves to be the people of Goethe. Even Bismarck, the founder of the new age, never had the slightest idea of it, and believed himself to have reached the *conclusion* of a political process. Life is the process of effecting possibilities, and for the brain-man there are *only extensive* possibilities. This is probably the meaning of Napoleon's significant words to Goethe: " What have we today to do with destiny? Policy is destiny."

I see in Cecil Rhodes the first man of a new age. He stands for the political style of a far-ranging, Western, Teutonic and especially German future; and his phrase " expansion is everything " is the Napoleonic reassertion of the indwelling tendency of *every* Civilization that has fully ripened – Roman, Arab or Chinese.

Rhodes is to be regarded as the first precursor of a Western type of Cæsars, whose day is to come. He stands midway between Napoleon and the force-men of the next centuries. Similarly Flaminius, who from 232 B.C. onward pressed the Romans to undertake the subjugation of Cisalpine Gaul, and so initiated the policy of colonial expansion, stands between Alexander and Cæsar. Strictly speaking, Flaminius was a private person. His real power was of a kind not embodied in any constitutional office. He exercised a dominant influence in the state at a time when the state-idea was giving way to the pressure of economic factors. With him there came to an end the *idea of state-service*, and there began the "will to power" which ignored traditions and reckoned only with forces.

Alexander and Napoleon were romantics, though they stood on the threshold of Civilization; in its cold clear air, the one fancied himself an Achilles, and the other read Werther. Cæsar, on the contrary, was a pure man of fact, gifted with immense understanding.

(For Rhodes political success meant territorial and financial success, and only that.) Of this Roman-ness within himself he was fully aware. It was only before his maps that he could fall into a sort of poetic trance, this son of the parsonage who, sent out to South Africa without means, made a gigantic fortune and employed it as the engine of political aims. His idea of a trans-African railway from the Cape to Cairo; his project of a South African empire; his intellectual hold on the hard metal souls of the mining magnates whose wealth he forced into the service of his schemes; his capital Bulawayo, royally planned as a future Residence by a statesman who was all-powerful, yet stood in no definite relation to the State; his wars, his dip-

lomatic deals, his road-systems, his syndicates, his armies, his conception of the " great duty to civilization " of the man of brain – all this, broad and imposing, is the prelude of a future which is still in store for us, and with which the history of West-European mankind will be definitely *closed*.

He who does not understand that this outcome is obligatory and insusceptible of modification, that our choice is between willing *this* and willing nothing at all, between cleaving to *this* destiny and despairing of the future and of life itself; he who cannot feel that there is grandeur also in the realizations of powerful intelligences, in the energy and discipline of metal-hard natures, in battles fought with the coldest and most abstract means; he who is obsessed with the idealism of a provincial, and would pursue the ways of life of past ages – must forgo all desire to comprehend history, to live through history or to make history.

Thus regarded, the Imperium Romanum appears no longer as an isolated phenomenon, but as the normal product of a strict and energetic, megalopolitan, predominantly practical spirituality. It is typical of a final and irreversible condition which has occurred often enough, though it has only been identified as such in this instance.

Let it be realized, then:

The 19th and 20th centuries, hitherto looked on as the highest point of an ascending straight line of world-history, are in reality a stage of life which may be observed in every Culture that has ripened to its limit. It is a stage of life characterized not by Socialists, Impressionists, electric railways, torpedoes and differential equations (for these are only body-constituents of the time), but by a

civilized spirituality which possesses not only these but also quite other creative possibilities.

Our own time represents a transitional phase which occurs with certainty under particular conditions. Similarly, there are perfectly well-defined phases *later* than the present-day state of West Europe, such as have occurred more than once in the history of the past.

The future of the West is not a limitless tending upwards and onwards for all time towards our present ideals, but a single phenomenon of history. It is strictly limited and defined as to form and duration, which covers a few centuries; and can be viewed and, in essentials, calculated, from available precedents.

This idea is one of those truths capable of entirely transforming the world-outlook of one who fully understands them and makes them intimately his own. It immensely deepens the world-picture natural and necessary to us. Already trained to regard world-historical evolution as an organic unit seen backwards from our standpoint in the present, we are enabled by its aid to follow the broad lines into the future – a privilege of dream-calculation till now permitted only to the physicist. It is, I repeat, in effect the substitution of a Copernican for a Ptolemaic aspect of history, an immeasurable widening of horizon.

Up to now everyone has been at liberty to hope what he pleased about the future. (Where there are no facts, sentiment rules.) But henceforward it will be every man's business to inform himself of what *can* happen, and therefore of what *will* happen – with the unalterable necessity of destiny and irrespective of personal ideals, hopes or desires.

When we use the risky word " freedom " we shall mean freedom to do, not this or that, but the necessary or nothing. The feeling that this is " just as it should be " is the hall-mark of the man of fact. To lament it and blame it is not to alter it.

To birth belongs death, to youth age, to life generally its form and its allotted span. The present is a civilized, emphatically not a cultured time. *Ipso facto* a great number of life-capacities fall out as impossible. This may be deplorable; may be and will be deplored in pessimist philosophy and poetry. But it is not in our power to make otherwise. It will not be – already it is not – permissible to defy clear historical experience – and to expect, merely because we hope, that this will spring, or that will flourish.

It will no doubt be objected that such a world-outlook would be unhealthy for all and fatal for many, once it ceased to be a mere theory, and was adopted as a practical scheme of life by the group of personalities effectively moulding the future.

Such is not my opinion. We are civilized, not Gothic or Rococo, people. We have to reckon with the hard cold facts of a *late* life, to which the parallel is to be found not in Pericles's Athens, but in Cæsar's Rome.

Of great painting or great music there can no longer be, for Western people, any question. Their architectural possibilities have been exhausted these hundred years. Only *extensive* possibilities are left to them.

For a sound and vigorous generation that is filled with unlimited hopes, I fail to see that it is any disadvantage to discover betimes that some of these hopes must come to nothing. And if the hopes thus doomed should be those

most dear, well, a man who is worth anything will not be dismayed.

It is true that the issue may be a tragic one for some individuals who in their decisive years are overpowered by the conviction that in the spheres of architecture, drama, painting, there is nothing left for *them* to conquer. What matter if they do go under! It has been the convention hitherto to admit no limits of any sort in these matters, and to believe that each period had its own task to do in each sphere. Tasks therefore were found by hook or by crook, leaving it to be settled posthumously whether or not the artist's faith was justified and his life-work necessary. Now, nobody but a pure romantic would take this way out. Such a pride is not the pride of a Roman. What are we to think of the individual who, standing before an exhausted quarry, would rather be told that a new vein will be struck tomorrow – the bait offered by the radically false and mannerized art of the moment – than be shown a rich and virgin clay-bed near by?

The lesson, I think, would be of benefit to the coming generations, as showing them what is possible – and therefore necessary – and what is excluded from the inward potentialities of their time. Hitherto an incredible total of intellect and power has been squandered in false directions. I can only hope that men of the new generation may be moved by this book to devote themselves to technics instead of lyrics, to the sea instead of the paint-brush, and to politics instead of epistemology. Better they could not do.

For me, the test of value to be applied to a thinker is his eye for the great facts of his own time. Only this can settle whether he is merely a clever architect of systems and

principles, versed in definitions and analyses, or whether it is the very soul of his time that speaks in his works and his intuitions. A philosopher who cannot grasp and command actuality as well will never be of the first rank.

We have not *chosen* this time. We cannot help it if we are born as men of the early winter of full Civilization, instead of on the golden summit of a ripe Culture, in a Phidias or a Mozart time. Everything depends on our seeing our own position, our *destiny*, clearly, on our realizing that though we may lie to ourselves about it, we cannot evade it. He who does not acknowledge this in his heart, ceases to be counted among the men of his generation, and remains either a simpleton, a charlatan, or a pedant.

CHAPTER 2

THE EIGHT CULTURES—AND MAN

> "*Man is not only historyless before the birth of the Culture; he again becomes so, as soon as a Civilization has worked itself out.*"

It was an incident, the sense of which cannot now be scrutinized, that the type of the higher Culture appeared suddenly in the field of human history. Quite possibly, indeed, it was some sudden event in the domain of earth-history that brought forth a new and different form into phenomenal existence. But the fact that we have before us eight such Cultures, all of the same build, the same development, and the same duration, justifies us in *looking at them comparatively*, and obtaining from our study a knowledge which we can extend backwards over lost periods and forwards over the future. Provided always that a Destiny of a different order does not replace this form-world, suddenly and basically, by another.

Our licence to proceed thus comes from general experience of organic being. In the history of the Raptores or the Coniferæ we cannot prophesy whether and when a

new species will arise. So, in that of Cultural history, we cannot say whether and when a new Culture shall be. But from the moment when a new being is conceived in the womb, or a seed sinks into the earth, we do know *the inner form of this new life-course*. And we know that the quiet course of its development and fulfilment may be disturbed by the pressure of external powers, but never altered.

The Civilization which at this present time has gripped the earth's whole surface is not a third *age*, but a necessary *stage* — of the Western Culture. It is distinguished from its analogues only by the forcefulness of its extension-tendency. Here experience ends. All speculation on what new forms will govern the life of future mankind (or, for that matter, whether there will be any such new forms) is mere trifling.

The group of the high Cultures is not, as a group, an organic unit. That they have happened in just this number, at just these places and times, is, for the human eye, an incident without deeper intelligibility. The ordering of the individual Cultures, on the contrary, has stood out distinctly.

About 3000 B.C. the two oldest Cultures began, in exceedingly limited areas, on the lower Nile and the lower Euphrates. The outcome of the Egyptian feudal period, marked by the establishment of a hereditary nobility, presents an astounding similarity with the course of events in Western feudalism from Emperor Henry IV (1056–1106). In due course, about 1800 on the Nile and rather earlier in Sumer-Akkad, we perceive the beginnings of the first Civilizations.

Of these the Asiatic displayed immense expansive

power. The " achievements of the Babylonian Civilization " (as the books say) — many things and notions connected with measuring, numbering, and accounting — travelled probably as far as the North and the Yellow Seas. Many a Babylonian trademark upon a tool may have come to be honoured, out there in the Germanic wild, as a magic symbol. Meantime the Babylonian realm itself passed from hand to hand. Kassites, Assyrians, Chaldeans, Medes, Persians, Macedonians — all of these small warrior-hosts under energetic leaders — successively replaced one another in the capital city without any serious resistance on the part of its people. It is a first example — soon paralleled in Egypt — of the " Roman Empire " style.

After 1500 B.C. three new Cultures begin. First, the Indian, in the upper Punjab. Then, a hundred years later, the Chinese on the middle Hwang-Ho. And then, about 1100, the Classical, on the Ægean Sea.

The Chinese historians speak of the three great dynasties of Hsia, Shang, and Chóu in much the same way as Napoleon regarded himself as a fourth dynasty following the Merovingians, the Carolingians, and the Capetians. In reality, the third coexisted with the Culture right through its course in each case. When in 441 B.C. the titular Emperor of the Chóu dynasty became a state pensioner of the " Eastern Duke " — and when in A.D. 1793 " Louis Capet " was executed — the Culture in each case passed into the Civilization. The period 480–230 is called by the Chinese historians the " Period of the Contending States." It culminated in a century of unbroken warfare between mass-armies with frightful social upheavals. Out of it came the " Roman " state of Tsin as founder of a Chinese Imperium.

This phase Egypt experienced between 1780 and 1580 B.C., of which the last century was the "Hyksos" time. The Classical experienced it from Chæronea (338); and, at the high pitch of horror, from the Gracchi (133) to Actium (31 B.C.). And it is the destiny of the West-European-American world for the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

The Arabian Culture is a discovery. Its unity was suspected by late Arabians. But it has so entirely escaped Western historical research that not even a satisfactory name can be found for it. The pre-Cultural period of the Arabian which we can follow out in Persian and Jewish history, lay completely within the area of the old Babylonian world. But the springtime was under the mighty spell of the Classical Civilization, which invaded from the West with all the power of a just-attained maturity. And the Egyptian and Indian Civilizations also made themselves distinctly felt. Then in turn the Arabian spirit — under Late Classical disguises for the most part — cast its spell over the nascent Culture of the West. The Arabian Civilization stratified over a still surviving Classical in the popular soul of south Spain, Provence, and Sicily; it became the model upon which the Gothic soul educated itself. The proper landscape of this Culture is remarkably extended and singularly fragmented. Let one put oneself at Palmyra or Ctesiphon, and, musing, look outwards all round. In the north is Osrhoene; Edessa became the Florence of the Arabian spring. To the west are Syria and Palestine — the home of the New Testament and of the Jewish Mishna, with Alexandria as a standing outpost. To the east Mazdaism experienced a mighty regeneration, corresponding to the birth of Jesus in Jewry, about which

the fragmentary state of Avesta literature enables us to say only *that* it happened. Here, too, were born the Talmud and the religion of Mani. Deep in the south, the future home of Islam, an age of chivalry was able to develop as fully as in the realm of the Sassanids. Even today there survive, unexplored, the ruins of castles and strongholds whence the decisive wars were waged between the Christian state of Axum and the Jewish state of the Himyarites on the two shores of the Red Sea, with Roman and Persian diplomacy poking the fire. In the extreme north was Byzantium, that strange mixture of sere, civilized, Classical, with vernal and *chevaleresque*, which is manifested above all in the bewildering history of the Byzantine army system. Into this world Islam at last – and far too late – brought a consciousness of unity.

Meantime yet another new Culture developed in Mexico. This lay so remote from the rest that no word even passed between them. All the more astonishing, therefore, is the similarity of its development to that of the Classical. No doubt the archæologist, standing before a teocalli, would be horrified to think of his Doric temple in such a connection. Yet it was a thoroughly Classical trait – feebleness of the will-to-power in the matter of technics – that kept the Aztecs ill armed, and so made possible their catastrophe.

For, as it happens, this is the one example of a Culture ended by violent death. It was not starved, suppressed, or thwarted, but murdered in the full glory of its unfolding – destroyed like a sunflower whose head is struck off by one passing. These states included a world-power and more than one federation – with an extent and resources far superior to those of the Greek and Roman states of Han-

nibal's day. They had a comprehensive policy, a carefully ordered financial system, and a highly developed legislation; with administrative ideas and economic tradition such as the ministers of Charles V could never have imagined; a wealth of literature in several languages; an intellectually brilliant and polite society in great cities to which the West could not show one single parallel. All this was not broken down in some desperate war, but washed out by a handful of bandits in a few years – and so entirely that the relics of the population retained not even a memory of it all. Of the giant city Tenochtitlan not a stone remains above ground. The cluster of great Mayan cities in the virgin forests of Yucatan succumbed swiftly to the attack of vegetation. We do not know the old name of any one of them. Of the literature three books survive, but no one can read them.

The most appalling feature of the tragedy was that it was not in the least a necessity of the Western Culture that it should happen. It was a private affair of adventurers. At the time no one in Germany, France, or England had any idea of what was taking place. This instance shows, as no other shows, that *the history of humanity has no meaning whatever*, and that deep significances reside only in the life-courses of the separate Cultures. Their interrelations are unimportant and accidental. In this case the accident was so cruelly banal, so supremely absurd, that it would not be tolerated in the wildest farce. A few cannon and handguns began and ended the drama.

At that date the West was still at a level which the Maya had already overpassed by 700. Nothing short of the age of Frederick the Great would have been ripe enough to comprehend the politics of the Mayapan League. And

what the Aztecs of A.D. 1500 were organizing lies for us well in the future.

But that which distinguished Faustian man, even then, from the man of any other Culture, was his irrepressible *urge into distance*. It was this, in the last resort, that killed and even annihilated the Mexican and Peruvian Culture — the unparalleled drive that was ready for service in any and every domain.

The true style-history of that Faustian soul accomplished itself only on the mother soil. But its resultant effects knew no bounds. On the spot where Tenochtitlan had stood, the Spaniards erected a Baroque cathedral adorned with masterpieces of Spanish painting and plastic. Already at that date the Portuguese had got to work in Hither India, and Late-Baroque architects from Spain and Italy in the heart of Poland and Russia. The English Rococo, and especially Empire, made for themselves a broad province in the Plantation States of North America, whose wonderful rooms and furniture are far less well known in Germany than they ought to be. Classicism was at work already in Canada and at the Cape. And presently there were no limits at all. It was just the same in every other domain of form.

The relation between this forceful young Civilization and the still remaining old ones is — that it covers them, all alike, with ever-thickening layers of West-European-American life-forms under which, slowly, the ancient native form disappears.

"Historical" man, as I understand the word and as all great historians have meant it to be taken, is the man of a

Culture that is in full march towards self-fulfilment. Before this, after this, outside this, man is *historyless;* and the destinies of the people to which he belongs matter as little as the Earth's destiny matters when the plane of attention is the astronomical and not the geological.

From this there follows a fact of the most decisive importance, and one that has never before been established. Man is not only historyless before the birth of the Culture; he again becomes so, as soon as a Civilization has worked itself out fully to the definitive form which betokens the end of the living development of the Culture, and the exhaustion of the last potentialities of its significant existence.

That which we see in the Egyptian Civilization after Seti I (1300) — and in the Chinese, the Indian, the Arabian to this day, is just the old zoölogical up-and-down of the primitive age again — notwithstanding all the cleverness of the religious, philosophical and, especially, political forms in which it is wrapped.

Whether the lords sitting in Babylon were wild warhordes like the Kassites, or refined inheritors like the Persians; when, for how long, and with what success they kept their seats, signified nothing from the standpoint of Babylon. The comfort of the population was affected by such things, naturally. But they made no difference to the fact that the soul of this world was extinct and its events, therefore, void of any deep meaning. A new dynasty, native or foreign, in Egypt; a revolution or a conquest in China; a new Germanic people in the Roman Empire; these were elements in the history of the landscape, like a change in the fauna or the migration of a flock of birds.

In the genuine history of higher men, the stake fought

for and the basis of the animal struggle to prevail is ever the actualization of something that is essentially spiritual, the translation of an idea into a living historical form – even when driver and driven are completely unconscious of the symbolic force of their doings, purposes, and fortunes.

This applies equally to the struggle of big style-tendencies in art (Gothic and Renaissance); of philosophy (Stoics and Epicureans); of political ideals (Oligarchy and Tyrannis); and of economic forms (Capitalism and Socialism).

But the post-history is void of all this. All that remains is the struggle for mere power, for animal advantage *per se*. Whereas previously power, even when to all appearance destitute of any inspiration, was always somehow serving the Idea, in the late Civilization even the most convincing illusion of an idea is only the mask for purely zoölogical strivings.

The distinction between Indian philosophy before and after Buddha is this: the former is a grand movement towards attaining the aim of Indian thought by and in the Indian soul; the latter is the perpetual turning-up of new facets of a now crystallized and undevelopable thought-stock. The solutions are there, for good, though the fashions of expressing them change.

The same is true of Chinese painting before and after the Han dynasties – whether we know it or not – and of Egyptian architecture before and after the beginning of the New Empire.

So also with technics. The West's discoveries of the steam-engine and of electricity are accepted by the Chi-

nese today in just the same way — and with just the same religious awe — as bronze and the plough were accepted four thousand years ago, and fire in a still remoter age. Both, spiritually, differ *in toto* from the discoveries which the Chinese made for themselves in the Chóu period, and which in each instance signified an epoch in their inner history.

The Japanese belonged formerly to the Chinese Civilization and again belong to a Civilization — the Western — today. A Japanese Culture in the genuine sense there has never been. Japanese Americanism must, therefore, be judged otherwise than as an outgrowth of what never was there.

Before and afterward, centuries play a vastly less important rôle than decades and even years within the Culture, *for the spans of time are gradually returning to the biological order.* This it is that confers upon these very Late conditions, which to the people living in them seem almost self-evident, that character of changeless pageantry which the genuine Culture-man — such as Herodotus in Egypt and the Western successors of Marco Polo in China — has found so astonishing, in comparison with his own vigorous pulse of development. It is the changelessness of non-history.

Classical history is at an end with Actium and the *Pax Romana.* There are no more of those great decisions which concentrate the inner meaning of a whole Culture. Unreason, biology, is beginning to dominate. It is becoming a matter of indifference for the world — though not for the actions of the private individual — whether an event turns out thus or thus. All great political questions

are solved, as they are solved sooner or later in every Civilization. For questions are no longer felt as questions and are not asked.

Yet a little while, and man will cease to understand what problems were really involved in the earlier catastrophes. What is not livingly experienced of oneself cannot be livingly experienced of another. When the later Egyptians speak of the Hyksos time, or when the later Chinese speak of the corresponding period of the "Contending States," they are judging the outward picture according to the criteria of their own ways of life, in which there are no riddles more. They see in these things merely struggles for power. They do not see that those desperate wars, external and internal, wars in which men stirred up the alien against their own kin, were fought for an idea.

Today we understand what was taking place, in fearful alternations of tension and discharge, round the murder of Tiberius Gracchus and that of Clodius. In 1700 we could not have done so; and in 2200 we shall again be unable to do so. It is just the same with that of Chian, a Napoleonic figure, in whom later Egyptian historians could discover nothing more characterized than a "Hyksos king." Had it not been for the coming of the Germans, Roman historians a thousand years later might similarly have put the Gracchi, Marius, Sulla, and Cicero together as a dynasty which was overthrown by Cæsar.

When Vindex and Galba in 68 set out to restore "the Republic," they were gambling on a notion in days when notions having genuine symbolic force had ceased to be. The only question was who should have the plain material power. The struggle for the Cæsar-title became steadily more and more negroid, and might have gone on

century after century in increasingly primitive and, therefore, "eternal" forms.

These populations no longer possessed a soul. Consequently they could no longer have a history proper to themselves. At best they might acquire some significance as an object in the history of an alien Culture, and whatever deeper meaning this relation possessed would be derived entirely from the will of the alien Life.

Any effective historical happening that does take place on the soil of an old Civilization acquires its consistency as a course of events from elsewhere, and never from any part played in it by the man of that soil.

CHAPTER 3

THE CULTURES AS SEPARATE ORGANISMS

> "*Every Culture, every one of its intrinsically necessary stages and periods, has a definite duration —always the same, always recurring with the emphasis of a symbol.*"

THE PICTURE that we possess of the history of the earth's crust and of life is at present still dominated by the ideas which civilized English thought has developed, since the Age of Enlightenment, out of the English habit of life.

This "English" type of causality is not only shallow, but also far too narrow. It limits possible causal connections, in the first place, to those which work out their *entire* course on the earth's surface. This immediately excludes all great cosmic relations between earthly life-phenomena and the events of the solar system and the stellar universe. It assumes the impossible postulate that the exterior face of the earth-ball is a completely insulated region of natural phenomena. It assumes that connections which are not comprehensible by the means at

present available to the human consciousness – namely, sensation refined by instruments and thought precised by theory – do not even exist.

It will be the characteristic task of the twentieth century, as compared with the nineteenth, to get rid of this system of superficial causality. All that we see about us impels us to the conviction that again and again profound and very sudden changes take place in the being of plants and animals – changes which are of a cosmic kind, and nowise restricted to the earth's surface. These are beyond the ken of human sense and understanding in respect of causes, if not indeed in all respects. So, too, we observe that swift and deep changes assert themselves in the history of the great Cultures, without assignable causes, influences, or purposes of any kind. The Gothic and the Pyramid styles come into full being as suddenly as do the Chinese imperialism of Shih-huang-ti and the Roman of Augustus, as Hellenism and Buddhism and Islam.

It is exactly the same with the events in the individual life of every person who counts at all. He who is ignorant of this knows nothing of men and still less of children. Every being, active or contemplative, strides on to its fulfilment by *epochs*. And we have to assume just such epochs in the history of solar systems and the world of the fixed stars. The origins of the earth, of life, of the free-moving animal *are* such epochs, and, therefore, mysteries that we can do no more than accept.

Cultures are organisms, and world-history is their collective biography. Morphologically, the immense history of the Chinese or of the Classical Culture is the exact equivalent of the petty history of the individual man, or of the animal, or the tree, or the flower. If we set free

their shapes, till now hidden all too deep under the surface of a trite "history of human progress," and let them march past us in the spirit, it cannot but be that we shall succeed in distinguishing, amidst all that is special or unessential, the primitive culture-form, *the* Culture that underlies as ideal all the individual Cultures.

A boundless mass of human Being, flowing in a stream without banks – such is the groundwork of the Faustian picture of human history.

Over this surface, the great Cultures accomplish their majestic wave-cycles. They appear suddenly, swell in splendid lines, flatten again and vanish, and the face of the waters is once more a sleeping waste.

A Culture is born in the moment when a great soul awakens out of the proto-spirituality of ever-childish humanity, and detaches itself – a form from the formless, a bounded and mortal thing from the boundless and enduring. It blooms on the soil of an exactly-definable landscape, to which plant-wise it remains bound. It dies when this soul has actualized the full sum of its possibilities in the shape of peoples, languages, dogmas, arts, states, sciences, and reverts into the proto-soul.

Its living existence, that sequence of great epochs which define and display the stages of fulfilment, is an inner passionate struggle to maintain the Idea against the powers of Chaos without, and the unconscious muttering deep-down within. It is not only the artist who struggles against the resistance of the material and the stifling of the idea within him. Every Culture stands in a deeply-symbolical, almost in a mystical, relation to the Extended, the space, in which and through which it strives to actualize itself. The aim once attained – the idea, the entire content of inner possi-

bilities, fulfilled and made externally actual – the Culture suddenly hardens. It mortifies, its blood congeals, its force breaks down, and it becomes *Civilization*, the thing which we feel and understand in the words Egypticism, Byzantinism, Mandarinism. As such they may, like a worn-out giant of the primeval forest, thrust their decaying branches towards the sky for hundreds or thousands of years, as we see in China, in India, in the Islamic world. It was thus that the Classical Civilization rose gigantic, in the Imperial age, with a false semblance of youth and strength and fullness, and robbed the young Arabian Culture of the East of light and air.

This – the inward and outward fulfilment, the finality, that awaits every living Culture – is the purport of all the historic " declines." Amongst them is that decline of the Classical which we know so well and fully. Another decline, entirely comparable to it in course and duration, will occupy the first centuries of the coming millennium, and is heralded already and sensibly in and around us today – the decline of the West.

Every Culture passes through the age-phases of the individual man. Each has its childhood, youth, manhood and old age.

It is a young and trembling soul, heavy with misgivings, that reveals itself in the morning of Romanesque and Gothic. It fills the Faustian landscape from the Provence of the troubadours to the Hildesheim cathedral of Bishop Bernward. The spring wind blows over it.

" In the works of the Old-German architecture," says Goethe, " one sees the blossoming of an extraordinary state. Anyone immediately confronted with such a blossoming can do no more than wonder; but one who can see

into the secret inner life of the plant and its rain of forces, who can observe how the buds expand, little by little, sees the thing with quite other eyes and knows what he is seeing."

Childhood speaks to us also – and in the same tones – out of early-Homeric Doric, out of early-Christian (which is really early-Arabian) art, and out of the works of the Old Kingdom in Egypt that began with the Fourth Dynasty. There a mystic world-consciousness is fighting like a harassed debtor against all the dark and dæmonic in itself and in Nature, while slowly ripening itself for the pure, day-bright expression of the existence that it will at last achieve and know.

The more nearly a Culture approaches the noon culmination of its being, the more virile, austere, controlled, intense is the form-language it has secured for itself, the more assured is its sense of its own power, the clearer its lineaments. In the spring all this had still been dim and confused, tentative, filled with childish yearning and fears. Witness the ornament of Romanesque-Gothic church porches of Saxony and southern France; the early-Christian catacombs; the Dipylon vases. But there is now the full consciousness of ripened creative power that we see in the time of the early Middle Kingdom of Egypt; in the Athens of the Pisistratidæ; in the age of Justinian; in that of the Counter-Reformation. We find every individual trait of expression deliberate, strict, measured, marvellous in its ease and self-confidence. And we find, too, that everywhere, at moments, the coming fulfilment suggested itself. In such moments were created the head of Amenemhet III (the so-called "Hyksos Sphinx" of

Tanis); the domes of Hagia Sophia; the paintings of Titian.

Still later, tender to the point of fragility, fragrant with the sweetness of late October days, come the Cnidian Aphrodite and the Hall of the Maidens in the Erechtheum; the arabesques on Saracen horseshoe-arches; the Zwinger of Dresden; Watteau; Mozart.

At last, in the grey dawn of Civilization, the fire in the Soul dies down. The dwindling powers rise to one more, half-successful, effort of creation, and produce the Classicism that is common to all dying Cultures. The soul thinks once again, and in Romanticism looks back piteously to its childhood. Then finally, weary, reluctant, cold, it loses its desire to be, and, as in Imperial Rome, wishes itself out of the overlong daylight and back in the darkness of protomysticism, in the womb of the mother, in the grave. The spell of a " second religiousness " comes upon it – and Late-Classical man turns to the practice of the cults of Mithras, of Isis, of the Sun – those very cults into which a soul just born in the East has been pouring a new wine of dreams and fears and loneliness.

The notion of life-duration as applied to a man, a butterfly, an oak, a blade of grass, comprises a specific time-value, which is quite independent of all the accidents of the individual case. Ten years are a slice of life which is approximately equivalent for all men, and the metamorphosis of insects is associated with a number of days exactly known and predictable in individual cases. Without doubt the biology of the future will – in opposition to Darwinism and to the exclusion, in principle, of causal fitness-motives for the origins of species – take these *preordained*

life durations as the starting-point for a new enunciation of its problem. The duration of a generation – whatever may be its nature – is a fact of almost mystical significance.

Now, such relations are valid also, and to an extent never hitherto imagined, for all the higher Cultures. *Every Culture, every adolescence and maturing and decay of a Culture, every one of its intrinsically necessary stages and periods, has a definite duration – always the same, always recurring with the emphasis of a symbol.*

In the present work we cannot attempt to open up this world of most mysterious connections. But the facts that will emerge again and again as we go on will tell us of themselves how much lies hidden here. What is the meaning of that striking fifty-year period, the rhythm of the political, intellectual and artistic "becoming" of all Cultures? Of the 300-year period of the Baroque, of the Ionic, of the great mathematics, of Attic sculpture, of mosaic painting, of counterpoint, of Galileian mechanics? What does the *ideal* life of one millennium for each Culture mean, in comparison with the individual man's "three-score years and ten"?

As the plant's being is brought to expression in form, dress and carriage by leaves, blossoms, twigs and fruit, so also is the being of a Culture manifested by its religious, intellectual, political and economic formations.

In this sense, too, every individual being that has any sort of importance recapitulates, of intrinsic necessity, all the epochs of the Culture to which it belongs. In each one of us, at that decisive moment when he begins to know that he is an ego, the inner life wakens just where and just how that of the Culture wakened long ago. Each of us men of the West, in his child's day-dreams and child's

play, lives again its Gothic – the cathedrals, the castles, the hero-sagas, the crusader's "Dieu le veult," the soul's oath of young Parsival. Every young Greek had his Homeric age and his Marathon.

Biology employs the term *homology* of organs to signify morphological equivalence, in contradistinction to the term analogy which relates to functional equivalence. It is known for every part of the bone-structure of the human head an exactly corresponding part is found in all vertebrated animals right down to the fish. The pectoral fins of fish and the feet, wings and hands of terrestrial vertebrates are homologous organs, even though they have lost every trace of similarity. The lungs of terrestrial, and the swim-bladders of aquatic animals, are homologous. Lungs and gills, on the other hand, are analogous – that is, similar in point of use.

It is not superfluous to add that there is nothing of the causal kind in these *pure phenomena* of "Living Nature." Materialism, in order to get a system for the pedestrian reasoner, has had to adulterate the picture of them with fitness-causes.

The application of the "homology" principle to historical phenomena brings with it an entirely new connotation for the word "contemporary." I designate as contemporary two historical facts that occur in exactly the same – relative – positions in their respective Cultures, and therefore possess exactly equivalent importance. The development of the Classical and that of the Western mathematic proceeded in complete congruence. We might venture to describe Pythagoras as the contemporary of Descartes; Archytas of Laplace; Archimedes of Gauss. The Ionic and the Baroque, again, ran their course *contem-*

poraneously. Polygnotus pairs in time with Rembrandt; Polycletus with Bach. The Reformation, Puritanism and, above all, the turn to Civilization appear simultaneously in all Cultures; in the Classical this last epoch bears the names of Philip and Alexander; in our West those of the Revolution and Napoleon. Contemporary, too, are the building of Alexandria, of Baghdad, and of Washington; Classical coinage and our double-entry book-keeping; the first Tyrannis and the Fronde; Augustus and Shih-huang-ti; Hannibal and the World War.

Without exception all great creations and forms in religion, art, politics, social life, economy and science appear, fulfil themselves and die down *contemporaneously* in all the Cultures. The inner structure of one corresponds strictly with that of all the others. There is not a single phenomenon of deep physiognomic importance in the record of one for which we could not find a counterpart in the record of every other. And this counterpart is to be found under a characteristic form and in a perfectly definite chronological position.

At the same time, if we are to grasp such homologies of facts, we shall need to have a far deeper insight and a far more critical attitude towards the visible foreground of things than historians have hitherto been wont to display. Who amongst them, for instance, would have allowed himself to dream that the counterpart of Protestantism was to be found in the Dionysiac movement, and that English Puritanism was for the West what Islam was for the Arabian world?

Seen from this angle, history offers possibilities far beyond the ambitions of all previous research, which has contented itself in the main with arranging the facts of

the past so far as these were known (and that according to a one-line scheme). The possibilities present themselves of

Overpassing the present as a research-limit, and predetermining the spiritual form, duration, rhythm, meaning and product of the *still unaccomplished* stages of our Western History; and

Reconstructing long-vanished and unknown epochs, even whole Cultures of the past, by means of morphological connections – in much the same way as modern palæontology deduces far-reaching and trustworthy conclusions, as to skeletal structure and species, from a single unearthed skull-fragment.

It is possible, given the physiognomic rhythm, to recover from scattered details of ornament, building, script – or from odd political, economic and religious data – the organic characters of whole centuries of history; and from known elements on the scale of art-expression, to find corresponding elements on the scale of political forms; or from that of mathematical forms to read that of economic. This is a truly Goethian method – rooted in fact in Goethe's conception of the *prime phenomenon.* It is already to a limited extent current in comparative zoology. It can be extended, to a degree hitherto undreamed of, over the whole field of history.

Since every young Culture superficially shows form-elements of older Cultures, these elements are supposed to have had continuing effect. And when a set of such effects has been strung together, the historian regards it with satisfaction as a sound piece of work.

This mode of treatment rests upon the idea of a signifi-

cant singleness in the history of all mankind. Our knowledge has long overpassed the limits of this chart. It is not products that "influence," but creators that absorb. It is not microcosmic units that move, but cosmic entities that prick amongst them and appropriate them. Were it otherwise – were these systems very beings, that could exercise an activity (for "influence" is an organic activity) – the picture of history would be quite other than what it is. Consider how every maturing man and every living Culture is continuously bathed in innumerable potential influences. Out of all these, only some few are *admitted* as such. The great majority are not. Is choice concerned with the works, or with the men?

The historian who is intent upon establishing causal series counts only the influences that are present. The other side of the reckoning – those that are not – does not appear.

With the psychology of the "positive" influences is associated that of the "negative."

Two Cultures may touch between man and man, or the man of one Culture may be confronted by the dead form-world of another as presented in its communicable relics. In both cases the agent is the man himself. The closed-off act of A can be vivified by B only out of his own being, and *eo ipso* it becomes B's, his inward property, his work, and part of himself.

There was no movement of "Buddhism" from India to China, but an acceptance of part of the Indian Buddhists' store of images by Chinese of a certain spiritual tendency; they fashioned out a *new* mode of religious expression having meaning for Chinese, and only Chinese, Buddhists. What matters in all such cases is not the original meanings

of the forms, but the forms themselves, as disclosing to the active sensibility and understanding of the observer potential modes of his own creativeness. Connotations are not transferable.

Men of two different kinds are parted, each in his own spiritual loneliness, by an impassable gulf. Even though Indians and Chinese in those days both felt as Buddhists, they were spiritually as far apart as ever. The same words, the same rites, the same symbols — but two different souls, each going its own way.

Searching through all Cultures, then, one will always find that the continuation of earlier creations into a later Culture is only apparent. In fact, the younger *being* has set up a few, very few, relations to the older *being*, always without regard to the original meanings of that which it makes its own.

What becomes, then, of the " permanent conquests " of philosophy and science? We are told again and again how much of Greek philosophy still lives on today. But this is only a figure of speech without real content. For first Magian, and then Faustian humanity, each with the deep wisdom of its unimpaired instincts, rejected that philosophy; or passed unregarding by it; or retained its formulæ under radically new interpretations.

The naïve credulity of erudite enthusiasm deceives itself here. Greek philosophic notions would make a long catalogue, and the further it is taken, the more vanishingly small becomes the proportion of the alleged survivals.

The sum total of the Greek philosophy that we possess, actually and not merely superficially, is practically nil. Let us be honest and take the old philosophers at their word; not one proposition of Heraclitus or Democritus or

Plato is true for us unless and until we have accommodated it to ourselves. And how much, after all, have we taken over of the methods, the concepts, the intentions, and the means of Greek science, let alone its basically incomprehensible terms? The Renaissance, men say, was completely under the "influence" of Classical art. But what about the form of the Doric temple, the Ionic column, the relation of column to architrave, the choice of colour, the treatment of background and perspective in painting, the principles of figure-grouping, vase-painting, mosaic, encaustic, the structural element in statuary, the proportions of Lysippus? Why did all this exercise no "influence"?

Because that which one (here, the Renaissance artist) *wills to express is in him a priori.* Of the stocks of dead forms that he had in front of him, he really saw only the few that he wanted to see, and saw them as he wanted them – namely in line with his own intention, and not with the intention of the original creator; for no living art ever seriously considers that.

Try to follow, element by element, the "influence" of Egyptian plastic upon early Greek, and you will find in the end that there is none at all. The Greek will-to-form took out of the older art-stock some few characteristics that it would in any case have discovered in some shape for itself. All round the Classical landscape there were working, or had worked, Egyptians, Cretans, Babylonians, Assyrians, Hittites, Persians, and Phœnicians. The works of these peoples – their buildings, ornaments, artworks, cults, state-forms, scripts, and sciences, were known to the Greeks in profusion. But how much out

of all this mass did the Classical soul extract as its own means of expression?

I repeat, it is only the relations that are *accepted* that we observe. But what of those that were *not* accepted?

Why, for example, do we fail to find in the former category the pyramid, pylon, and obelisk of Egypt, or hieroglyphic, or cuneiform? What of the stock of Byzantium and of the Moorish East that was *not* accepted by Gothic art and thought in Spain and Sicily? Every relation that was accepted was not only an exception, but also a misunderstanding. And the inner force of a Being is never so clearly evidenced as it is in this *art of deliberate misunderstanding.*

The more enthusiastically we laud the principles of an alien thought, the more fundamentally in truth we have denatured it. The more humble our acceptance of an alien religion, the more certain it is that that religion has already assumed the form of the new soul. Truly, someone ought to have written the history of the "three Aristotles" – Greek, Arabian, and Gothic – who had not one concept or thought in common. Or the history of the transformation of Magian Christianity into Faustian!

We are told in sermon and book that this religion extended from the old Church into and over the Western field without change of essence. Actually, Magian man evolved out of the deepest depths of his dualistic world-consciousness a language of his own religious awareness that we call "the" Christian religion. So much of this experience as was communicable – words, formulæ, rites – was accepted by the man of the Late-Classical Civilization as a means of expression for his religious need. Then

it passed from man to man, even to the Germans of the Western pre-Culture, in words always the same and in sense always altering.

Men would never have dared to *improve upon* the original meanings of the holy words – it was simply that they did not know these meanings. If this be doubted, let the doubter study "the" idea of Grace, as it appears under the dualistic interpretation of Augustine affecting a substance in man, and under the dynamic interpretation of Calvin, affecting a will in man. Or that Magian idea, which we can hardly grasp at all, of the consensus (Arabic *ijma*) wherein, as a consequence of the presence in each man of a *pneuma* emanating from the divine *pneuma*, the unanimous opinion of the elect is held to be immediate divine Truth. It was this that gave the decisions of the early Church Councils their authoritative character. It underlies the scientific methods that rule in the world of Islam to this day. It was because Western men did not understand this that the Church Councils of later Gothic times amounted, for him, to nothing more than a kind of parliament for limiting the spiritual mobility of the Papacy. This idea of what a Council meant prevailed even in the fifteenth century – think of Constance and Basel, Savonarola and Luther. In the end it disappeared, as futile and meaningless, before the conception of Papal Infallibility.

Or take, again, the idea, universal in the Early Arabian world, of the resurrection of the flesh, which again presupposed that of divine and human *pneuma*. Classical man assumed that the soul, as the form and meaning of the body, was somehow co-created therewith, and Greek thought scarcely mentions it. Silence on a matter of such

gravity may be due to one or the other of two reasons — the idea's not being there at all, or being so self-evident as not to emerge into consciousness as a problem. With Arabian man it was the latter. But just as self-evident for him was the notion that his *pneuma* was an emanation from God that had taken up residence in his body. Necessarily, therefore, there had to be something from which the human soul should rise again on the Day of Judgment. Hence resurrection was thought of as ἐκ νεκρῶν, "out of the corpses." This, in its deeper meaning, is utterly incomprehensible for the West. The words of Holy Scripture were not indeed doubted. But unconsciously another meaning was substituted by the finer minds amongst Catholics. This other meaning, unmistakable already in Luther and today quite general, is the conception of immortality as the continued existence to all eternity of the soul as a centre of force. Were Paul or Augustine to become acquainted with our ideas of Christianity, they would reject all our dogmas, all our books, and all our concepts as utterly erroneous and heretical.

As the strongest example of a system that to all appearance has travelled unaltered through two millennia, and yet actually has passed through three whole courses of evolution in three Cultures, with completely different meanings in each, we may take *Roman law*.

The Western jurisprudence took over ancient words, yet only the most superficial elements of the ancient meanings still adhered to them. The consistency of the text disclosed only the *logical* use of the words, not the life that underlay them. No practice can reawaken the silent metaphysic of old jural ideas.

Classical law was a law of *bodies*, while ours is a law of

functions. The Romans created a juristic statics; our task is juristic dynamics. For us persons are not bodies, but units of force and will; and things are not bodies, but aims, means, and creations of these units. The Classical relation between bodies was positional, but the relation between forces is called action. For a Roman the slave was a thing which produced new things. A writer like Cicero could never have conceived of "intellectual property," let alone property in a practical notion or in the potentialities of talent. For us, on the contrary, the organizer or inventor or promoter is *a generative force which works upon other, executive, forces*, by giving direction, aim, and means to their action. Both belong to economic life, not as possessors of things, but as carriers of energies.

It is incidental that the history of higher mankind fulfils itself in the form of great Cultures, and that one of these Cultures awoke in West Europe about the year 1000. Yet from the moment of awakening it is bound by its charter.

Napoleon had in his graver moments a strong feeling for the deep logic of world-becoming. And in such moments he could divine to what extent he *was*, and to what extent he *had*, a destiny. He said at the beginning of the Russian campaign: "I feel myself driven towards an end that I do not know. As soon as I shall have reached it, as soon as I shall become unnecessary, an atom will suffice to shatter me. Till then, not all the forces of mankind can do anything against me."

CHAPTER 4

WHAT IS RACE?

> "*Every nation is represented in history by a minority. So long as a people is a nation and works out the Destiny of a nation, there is in it a minority which in the name of all represents and fulfills its history.*"

For me, the "people" is a *unit of the soul.* The great events of history were not really achieved by peoples; *they themselves created the peoples.* Every act alters the soul of the doer. The "Americans" did *not* immigrate from Europe. The name of the Florentine geographer Amerigo Vespucci designates today not only a continent, but also a people in the true sense of the word, whose specific character was born in the spiritual upheavals of 1775 and, above all, 1861–5.

This is the one and only connotation of the word "people." Neither unity of speech nor physical descent is decisive. That which distinguishes the people from the population, raises it up out of the population, and will one day

let it find its level again in the population, is always the inwardly lived experience of the "we." The deeper this feeling is, the stronger is the *vis viva* of the people. There are energetic and tame, ephemeral and indestructible, forms of peoples. They can change speech, name, race, and land, but so long as their soul lasts, they can gather to themselves and transform human material of any and every provenance. The Roman name in Hannibal's day meant a people, in Trajan's time nothing more than a population.

Under all the plurality of microcosmic beings, we are perpetually meeting with the formation of *inspired mass-units*, beings of a higher order. Whether they develop slowly or come into existence in a moment, they contain all the feelings and passions of the individual, enigmatic in their inward character and inaccessible to reasoning — though the connoisseur can see into and reckon upon their reactions well enough. Here too we distinguish the generic animal unities, which are sensed, from the purely human associations, which depend upon the understanding, and cohere on the basis of like opinions, like purposes, or like knowledge.

One can join or resign from an intellectual association as one pleases, for only one's waking-consciousness is involved. But to a cosmic unity one is *committed*, and committed with one's entire being. Crowds of this order of unity are seized by storms of enthusiasm or, as readily, of panic. They are noisy and ecstatic at Eleusis or Lourdes, or heroically firm like the Spartans of Thermopylæ and the last Goths in the battle of Vesuvius. They form them-

selves to the music of chorales, marches, and dances; and are sensitive like human and animal thoroughbreds to the effects of bright colours, decoration, costume, and uniform.

These inspired aggregates are born and die. Intellectual associations are mere sums in the mathematical sense, varying by addition and subtraction, unless and until (as sometimes happens) a mere coincidence of opinion strikes so impressively as to reach the blood and so, suddenly, to create out of the sum a Being. In any political turning-point, words may become fates and opinions passions. A chance crowd is herded together in the street and has *one* consciousness, *one* sensation, *one* language — until the short-lived soul flickers out and everyone goes his way again. This happened every day in the Paris of 1789, whenever the cry of "*A la lanterne!*" fell upon the ear.

These souls have their special psychology. A single soul is the mark of every genuine order or class.

All grand events of history are carried by beings of the cosmic order, by peoples, parties, armies, and classes — while the history of intellect runs its course in loose associations and circles, schools, levels of education, "tendencies" and "isms."

It is the hall-mark of the statesman that he has a sure and penetrating eye for these mass-souls that form and dissolve on the tide of the times, their strength and their duration, their direction and purpose.

The mightiest beings of this kind that we know are the higher Cultures. These are born in great spiritual upheavals, and in a thousand years of existence weld all aggregates of lower degree — nations, classes, towns, generations — into one unit.

Of course, it is often quite justifiable to align peoples with races. But " race " in this connexion must not be interpreted in the present-day Darwinian sense of the word. It cannot be accepted, surely, that a people was ever held together by the mere unity of physical origin, or, if it were, could maintain that unity even for ten generations. It cannot be too often reiterated that this physiological provenance has no existence except for science — never for folk-consciousness. No people was ever yet stirred to enthusiasm for *this* ideal of blood-purity.

In race there is nothing material, but something cosmic and directional — the felt harmony of a Destiny, the single cadence of the march of historical Being. It is inco-ordination of this wholly metaphysical beat that produces race-hatred. It is just as strong between Germans and Frenchmen as it is between Germans and Jews. It is resonance on this beat that makes the true love — so akin to hate — between man and wife. He who has not race knows nothing of this perilous love.

If a part of the human multitude that now speaks Indo-germanic languages, cherishes a certain race-ideal, what is evidenced thereby is not the existence of the prototype-people so dear to the scholar, but the metaphysical force and power of the ideal. It is highly significant that this ideal is expressed, never in the whole population, but mainly in its warrior-element and pre-eminently in its genuine nobility — that is, in men who live entirely in a world of facts, under the spell of historical becoming, destiny-men who will and dare. It was precisely in the early times (another significant point) that a born alien of quality and dignity could without particular difficulty gain admittance to the ruling class, and wives in particular were

chosen for their "breed" and not their descent. Correspondingly, the impress of race-traits is weakest (as may be observed even today) in the true priestly and scholarly natures, even though these often do stand in close blood-relationship to the others.

A strong spirit trains up the body into a product of art. The Romans formed, in the midst of the confused and even heteroclite tribes of Italy, a race of the firmest and strictest inward unity that was neither Etruscan nor Latin nor merely "Classical" – but quite specifically Roman. Nowhere is the force that cements a people set before us more plainly than in Roman busts of the late Republican period.

We see also an inward order in the historical stream of the peoples. They are neither linguistic nor political nor zoölogical, but spiritual, units. And this leads at once to the further distinction between *peoples before, within, and after a Culture*. It is a fact that has been profoundly felt in all ages that Culture-peoples are *more distinct* in character than the rest. Their predecessors I will call primitive peoples. These are the fugitive and heterogeneous associations that form and dissolve without ascertainable rule. At last, in the presentiment of a still unborn Culture (as, for example, in the pre-Homeric, the pre-Christian, and the Germanic periods), phase by phase, becoming ever more definite in type, they assemble the human material of a population into groups. All the time little or no alteration has been occurring in the stamp of man. Such a superposition of phases leads from the Cimbri and Teutones through the Marcomanni and Goths to the Franks, Lombards, and Saxons.

Instances of primitive peoples are the Jews and Persians

of the Seleucid age, the "Sea-peoples," the Egyptian Nomes of Menes's time.

And that which follows a Culture we may call – from its best-known example, the Egyptians of post-Roman times – fellah-peoples.

In the tenth century of our era the Faustian soul suddenly awoke and manifested itself in innumerable shapes. Amongst these, side by side with the architecture and the ornament, there appears a distinctly characterized form of "people." Out of the people-shapes of the Carolingian Empire – the Saxons, Swabians, Franks, Visigoths, Lombards – arise suddenly the Germans, the French, the Spaniards, the Italians. Hitherto (consciously and deliberately or not) historical research has uniformly regarded these Culture-peoples as primaries, and has treated the Culture itself as secondary, as their product. The creative units of history, accordingly, were simply the Indians, the Greeks, the Romans, the Germans, and so on. As the Greek Culture was the work of the Hellenes, they must have been in existence as such far earlier; therefore they must have been immigrants. Any other idea of creator and creation seemed inconceivable.

The facts here set forth lead to the reverse conclusion. The great Cultures are entities, primary or original, that arise out of the deepest foundations of spirituality. The peoples under the spell of a Culture are, alike in their inward form and in their whole manifestation, its products and not its authors. These shapes in which humanity is seized and moulded possess style and style-history no less than kinds of art and modes of thought. The people of Athens is a symbol not less than the Doric temple, the

Englishman not less than modern physics. There are peoples of Apollinian, Magian, Faustian cast. The Arabian Culture was *not* created by " the Arabs " – quite the contrary. The Magian Culture begins in the time of Christ, and the Arabian people represents its last great creation of that kind, a community bonded by Islam, as the Jewish and Persian communities before it had been bonded by their religions. World-history is the history of the great Cultures. And peoples are but the symbolic forms and vessels in which the men of these Cultures fulfil their Destinies.

In each of these Cultures, Mexican and Chinese, Indian and Egyptian, there is *a group of great peoples of identical style*, which arises at the beginning of the springtime, forming states and carrying history; throughout the course of its evolution it bears its fundamental form onward to the goal. The peoples are in the highest degree unlike amongst themselves – it is scarcely possible to conceive of a sharper contrast than that between Athenians and Spartans, Germans and Frenchmen, Tsin and Tsu; and all military history shows national hatred as the loftiest method of inducting historic decisions. But the moment that a people *alien* to the Culture makes an appearance in the field of history, there awakens everywhere an overpowering feeling of spiritual relationship. And the notion of the barbarian – meaning the man who inwardly does *not* belong to the Culture – is as clear-cut in the peoples of the Egyptian settlements and the Chinese world of states as it is in the Classical. The energy of the form is so high that it grasps and recasts neighbouring peoples. Witness the Carthaginians of Roman times, with their half-Classical

style; and the Russians who have figured as a people of Western style from Catherine the Great to the fall of Petrine Tsardom.

Peoples in the style of their Culture we will call *Nations*. The word itself distinguishes them from the forms that precede and that follow them. It is not merely a strong feeling of "we" that forges the inward unity of its most significant of all major associations. *Underlying the nation there is an Idea.* This stream of a collective being possesses a very deep relation to Destiny, to Time, and to History — a relation that is different in each instance — and one, too, that determines the relation of the human material to race, language, land, state, and religion. As the styles of the Old Chinese and the Classical peoples differ, so also the styles of their histories.

Life as experienced by primitive and by fellaheen peoples is just the zoölogical up-and-down, a planless happening without goal or cadenced march in time, wherein occurrences are many, but, in the last analysis, devoid of significance.

The only historical peoples, the peoples whose existence *is world-history*, are the nations. Let us be perfectly clear as to what is meant by this. In 1500 B.C. that which lived about Mycenæ and Tiryns was not *as yet* a nation; and that which lived in Minoan Crete was *no longer* a nation. Tiberius was the last ruler who tried to lead a Roman nation further on the road of history, who sought to *retrieve* it for history. By Marcus Aurelius there was only a Romanic population to be defended — a field for occurrences, but no longer for history. How many free pregenerations of Mede or Achæan or Hun folk there were, in what sort of social groups their predecessors and their

descendants lived, cannot be determined and depends upon no rule. But of a nation the life-period is determinate, and so are the pace and the rhythm in which its history moves to fulfilment.

From the beginning of the Chóu period to the rulership of Shih-huang-ti; from the events on which the Troy legend was founded to Augustus; and from Thinite times to the XVIII Dynasty; the numbers of generations are more or less the same. The " Late " period of the Culture — from Solon to Alexander, from Luther to Napoleon — embraces no more than about ten generations. Within such limits the destiny of the genuine Culture-people, and with it that of world-history in general, reach fulfilment.

Nations are *the true city-building peoples.* In the strongholds they arose, with the cities they ripen to the full height of their world-consciousness, and in the world-cities they dissolve. Every town-formation that has character has also *national* character. The village, which is wholly a thing of race, does not yet possess it; the megalopolis possesses it no longer. Of this essential, national character, which so colours the nation's public life that its slightest manifestation identifies it, we cannot exaggerate — we can scarcely imagine — the force, the self-sufficingness, and the *loneliness.* Between the souls of two Cultures the screen is impenetrable. If no Western may ever hope completely to understand the Indian or the Chinese, this is equally so, even more so, as between well-developed nations. Nations understand one another as little as individuals do so. Each understands merely a self-created picture of the other, and individuals with the insight to penetrate deeper are few and far between.

Vis-à-vis the Egyptians, all the Classical peoples necessarily felt themselves as relatives in one whole; but as between themselves they never understood each other. What sharper contrast is there than that between the Athenian and the Spartan spirit? German, French, and English modes of philosophical thinking are distinct, not merely in Bacon, Descartes, and Leibniz, but already in the age of Scholasticism. Even now, in modern physics and chemistry, the scientific method, the choice and type of experiments and hypotheses, their inter-relations, and their relative importance for the course and aim of the investigation, are markedly different in every nation. German and French piety, English and Spanish social ethics, German and English habits of life, stand so far apart that for the average man – and, therefore, for the public opinion of his community – the real inwardness of every foreign nation remains a deep secret and a source of continual and pregnant error.

In the Roman Empire men began generally to understand one another, but this was precisely because there had ceased to be anything worth understanding in the Classical city. With the advent of mutual comprehension this particular humanity ceased to live in nations, *and ipso facto ceased to be historic*.

Owing to the very depth of these experiences, it is not possible for a whole people to be *uniformly and throughout* a Culture-people, a nation. Amongst primitives each individual man has the same feeling of group-obligations. But the awakening of a nation into self-consciousness invariably takes place in gradations – that is, pre-eminently in the particular class that is strongest of soul and holds the others spellbound by a power derived from what it

has experienced. *Every nation is represented in history by a minority.*

At the beginning of the springtime it is the nobility, which in that period of its first appearance is the fine flowering of the people, the vessel in which the national character – unconscious, but felt all the more strongly in its cosmic pulse – receives its destined Style. The "we" is the knightly class, in the Egyptian feudal period of 2700 not less than in the Indian and the Chinese of 1200. The Homeric heroes *are* the Danai; the Norman barons *are* England. Centuries later, Saint-Simon – the embodiment, it is true, of an older France – used to say that "all France" was assembled in the King's ante-room; and there was a time in which Rome and the Senate were actually identical.

With the advent of the town the burgher becomes the vessel of nationality, and of a national *consciousness*, which he gets from the nobility and carries through to its fulfilment. Always it is particular circles, graduated in fine shades, that *in the name of* the people live, feel, act, and know how to die. But these circles become larger and larger.

In the eighteenth century arose the Western *concept* of the Nation which sets up (and on occasion energetically insists upon) the claim to be championed by everybody without exception. But in reality, as we know, the *émigrés* were just as convinced as the Jacobins that they were *the* people, *the* representatives of the French nation. A Culture-people which is coincident with "all" does not exist – this is possible only in primitive and fellaheen peoples, without depth or historical dignity.

So long as a people is a nation and works out the Des-

tiny of a nation, there is in it a minority which in the name of all represents and fulfils its history.

The Classical nations, in accordance with the static-Euclidean soul of their Culture, were corporeal units of the smallest imaginable size. It was not Hellenes or Ionians that were nations; but in each city the Demos, a union of adult men, legally and *by the same token nationally* defined between the type of the hero as upper limit and the slave as lower. The slave did not belong to the nation. On this account the enrolment of non-citizens in the army of a city, which on occasions of dire crisis was inevitable, was always felt as a profound blow to the national idea.

Synœcism, that mysterious process of early periods in which the inhabitants of a countryside give up their villages and assemble themselves as a town, marks the moment at which, having arrived at self-consciousness, the Classical nation constitutes itself as such. We can still trace the way in which this form of the nation steadily makes good from Homeric times to the epoch of the great colonizations. It responds exactly to the Classical prime-symbol: each folk was a body, visible and surveyable, a σῶμα, the express negation of the idea of geographical space.

To speak of " the Greeks and the Romans " as the eighteenth century did (and as we still do) is completely erroneous. A Greek " nation " in our sense is a misconception – the Greeks themselves never knew such an idea at all. The name of " Hellenes," which arose about 500, did not denote a people, but the aggregate of Classical Culture-men, the *sum* of their nations, in contradistinction to the " Barbarian " world. And the Romans, a true urban peo-

ple, could not conceive of their Empire otherwise than in the form of innumerable nation-points, the *civitates* into which, juridically as in other respects, they dissolved all the primitive peoples of their Imperium. When national feeling in *this* shape is extinguished, there is an end to Classical history.

A nation of the Magian type is the community of co-believers, the group of all who know the right way to salvation and are inwardly linked to one another by the *ijma* of this belief. Men belonged to a Classical nation by virtue of the possession of citizenship, to a Magian nation by virtue of a sacramental act – circumcision for the Jews, specific forms of baptism for the Mandæans or the Christians. An unbeliever was for a Magian folk what an alien was for a Classical – no intercourse with him, no *connubium*. This national separation went so far that in Palestine a Jewish-Aramaic and a Christian-Aramaic dialect formed themselves side by side.

Islam brought with it from the home of Mohammed the Arab name as the badge of its nationality. It is a mistake to equate these "Arabs" with the Beduin tribes of the desert. What created the new nation, with its passionate and strongly characteristic soul, was the *consensus* of the new faith. Its unity is no more derived from race and home than that of the Christian, Jewish, or Persian. It did not "migrate"; rather it owes its immense expansion to the incorporation within itself of the greater part of the early Magian nations. With the end of the first millennium of our era these nations one and all pass over into the form of fellah-peoples, and it is as fellaheen that the Christian peoples of the Balkans under Turkish rule, the Parsees in India, and the Jews in Western Europe have lived ever since.

In the West, nations of Faustian style emerge, more and more distinctly, from the time of Otto the Great (936–973), and in them the primitive people of the Carolingian period are swiftly dissolved. Already by A.D. 1000 the men who "mattered most" were everywhere beginning to sense themselves as Germans, Italians, Spaniards, Frenchmen; whereas hardly six generations earlier their ancestors had been to the depths of their souls Franks, Lombards, and Visigoths.

The people-form of this Culture is founded, like its Gothic architecture and it Infinitesimal Calculus, upon a tendency to the Infinite, in the spatial as well as the temporal sense. The nation-feeling comprises, from its beginning, a geographical horizon that, considering the period and its means of communication, can only be called vast, and is not paralleled in any other Culture. The fatherland as *extent* – as a region whose boundaries the individual has scarcely, if ever, seen and which nevertheless he will defend and die for – is something that in its symbolic depth and force men of other Cultures can never comprehend. The Magian nation does not as such possess an earthly home; the Classical possesses it only as a point-focus. The actuality that, even in Gothic times, united men from the banks of the Adige with men in the Order-castles of Lithuania in an association of feeling would have been inconceivable, even in ancient China and ancient Egypt. It stands in the sharpest opposition to the actuality of Rome and Athens, where every member of the Demos had the rest constantly in sight.

Still stronger is the sensitivity to distance *in time*. Before the fatherland-idea (which is a *consequence* of the existence of the nation) emerged at all, this passion evolved

another idea to which the Faustian nations owe that existence – the *dynastic* idea. Faustian peoples are historical peoples, communities that feel themselves bound together not by place or consensus, but by history. The eminent symbol and vessel of the common Destiny is the ruling "house." For Egyptian and for Chinese mankind the dynasty is a symbol of quite other meaning. Here what it signifies, as a will and an activity, *is Time*. All that we have been, all that we would be, is manifested in the being of the one generation; and our sense of this is much too profound to be upset by the worthlessness of a regent. What matters is not the person, but the idea, and it is for the sake of the idea that thousands have so often marched to their deaths with conviction in a genealogical quarrel.

Classical history was for Classical eyes only a chain of incidents leading from moment to moment. Magian history was for its members the progressive actualization in and through mankind of a world-plan laid down by God and accomplished between a creation and a cataclysm. But Faustian history is in our eyes a single grand willing of conscious logic, in the accomplishment of which nations are led and represented by their rulers.

It is a trait of race. Rational foundations it has not and cannot have – it has simply been felt so. We must not misjudge the depth and dignity of this feeling because there is an endless catalogue of perjured vassals and peoples, and an eternal comedy in the cringing of courtiers and the abjectness of the vulgar. All great symbols are spiritual and can be comprehended only in their highest forms. The private life of a pope bears no relation to the idea of the Papacy.

All nations of the West are of dynastic origins. But

over all there spreads soon the minority, composed of men of race, that feels membership in a nation as a great historical vocation. It is the hall-mark of Faustian peoples that they are conscious of the direction of their history. But this direction attaches to the sequence of the generations, and so the nature of the race-ideal is *genealogical* through and through. Darwinism, even, with its theories of descent and inheritance, is a sort of caricature of Gothic heraldry. And the world-as-history, when every individual lives in the plane of it, contains not only the tree of the individual family, ruling or other, but also the tree of the people as the basic form of all its happenings.

The scientific conception of the people, which I have dissected above, is derived essentially from the genealogical sense of the Gothic period. The notion that the peoples have their trees has made the Italians proud to be the heirs of Rome; and the Germans proud to recall their Teuton forefathers. And that is something quite different from the Classical belief in timeless descent from heroes and gods. Eventually, when after 1789 the notion of mother tongue came to be fitted on to the dynastic principle, the once merely scientific fancy of a primitive Indogermanic people transformed itself into a deeply felt genealogy of "the Aryan race." In the process the word "race" became almost a designation for Destiny.

Yet the "races" of the West are not the creators of the great nations, but *their result*. Not one of them had yet come into existence in Carolingian times. It was the class-ideal of chivalry, working creatively in different ways upon Germany, England, France, and Spain, that impressed upon an immense area what the individual nations felt and experienced as race. It was because the blood of

the ruling family incorporated the destiny, the being, of the whole nation, that the state-system of the Baroque was of genealogical structure. And most of the grand crises assumed the form of wars of dynastic succession. Even the catastrophic ruin of Napoleon, which settled the world's political organization for a century, took its shape from the fact that an adventurer dared to drive out with his blood that of the old dynasties, and that his attack upon a symbol made it historically a sacred duty to resist him.

All these peoples were the *consequence* of dynastic destinies. That there is a Portuguese people, and a Portuguese Brazil in the midst of Spanish America, is the result of the marriage of Count Henry of Burgundy in 1095. That there are Swiss and Hollanders is the result of a reaction against the House of Habsburg. That Lorraine is the name of a land and not of a people is a consequence of the childlessness of Lothar II.

It was the Kaiser-idea that welded the disjunct primitives of Charlemagne's time into the German nation. Germany and Empire are inseparable ideas.

The French people was forged out of Franks and Visigoths by its kings. It learned to feel itself as a whole for the first time at Bouvines in 1214.

The end of the eighteenth century witnessed the accomplishment of that remarkable turn with which national consciousness sought to emancipate itself from the dynastic principle. To all appearance this had happened in England long before. In this connection Magna Charta (1215) will occur to most readers; but some will not have failed to observe that the very recognition of the nation, involved in the recognition of its representatives, gave the dynastic feeling a fresh-enforced depth and refinement to

which the peoples of the Continent remained almost utter strangers. If the modern Englishman is (without appearing so) the most conservative human being in the world, and if in consequence his political management solves its problems so much by wordless harmony of national pulse instead of express discussion – and therefore has been the most successful up to now – the underlying cause is the *early emancipation of the dynastic feeling* from its expression in monarchical power.

The French Revolution, on the contrary, was in this regard only a victory of Rationalism. It set free not so much the nation as the concept of the nation. The dynastic has penetrated into the blood of the Western races, and on that very account it is a vexation to their intellect. A dynasty represents history, it is the history-become-flesh of a land. Intellect is timeless and unhistorical. The ideas of the Revolution were all "eternal" and "true." Universal human rights, freedom, and equality are literature and abstraction and not facts. Call all this republican if you will. In reality it was one more case of a minority striving in the name of all to introduce the new ideal into the world of fact. It became a power, but at the cost of the ideal. All it did was to replace the old felt adherence by the reasoned patriotism of the nineteenth century; by a civilized nationalism, only possible in our Culture. This, in France itself and even today, is unconsciously dynastic.

Out of the opposition of race and speech, blood and intellect, a new and specifically Western ideal arose to confront the genealogical ideal – that of the mother tongue. Enthusiasts there were in both countries who thought to replace the unifying force of the Emperor- and King-idea by the linking of republic and poetry – something of the

" return to nature " in this, but a return of history to nature. In place of the wars of succession came language-struggles, in which one nation sought to force its language, and therewith its nationality, upon the fragments of another. But no one will fail to observe that even the rationalistic conception of a nation as a linguistic unit can at best ignore, never abolish, the dynastic feeling — any more than a Hellenistic Greek could inwardly overcome his Polis-consciousness or a modern Jew the national *ijma*. The mother tongue does not arise out of nothing, but is itself a product of dynastic history. Without the Capetian line there would have been no French language, but a Romance-Frankish in the north and a Provençal in the south. The Italian written-language is to be credited to the German Emperors and above all to Frederick II.

The modern nations are primarily the populations of an old dynastic history. Yet in the nineteenth century the second concept of the nation as a unit of written language has annihilated the Austrian, and probably created the American. Thenceforward there have been in all countries two parties representing the nation in two opposed aspects, as dynastic-historical unit and as intellectual unit — the race party and the language party. These are reflections that evoke problems of politics that must await a later chapter.

CHAPTER 5

THE SOUL OF THE WEST

> "*Not the fact of space; but the fact that made it a necessity for the space-problem to become the problem of the Western, and only the Western, soul.*"

THERE are as many worlds as there are waking beings and like-living, like-feeling groups of beings. The supposedly single, independent and external world that each believes to be common to all is really an ever-new, uniquely-occurring and non-recurring experience in the existence of each.

Nature is a possession which is saturated through and through with the most personal connotations. *Nature is a function of the particular Culture.*

The outcome of Gauss's discovery, which *completely* altered the course of modern mathematics, was the statement that there are several equally valid structures of three-dimensional extension. That it should even be asked which of them corresponds to actual perception shows that the problem was not in the least comprehended. Mathematics, whether or not it employs visible images and

representations as working conveniences, concerns itself with systems that are entirely emancipated from life, time and distance; with form-worlds of pure numbers whose validity – not *fact-foundation* – is timeless. This validity, like everything else that is "known," is known by causal logic and not experienced.

Had Kant been precise, he would, instead of speaking of the "two forms of perception," have called time the form of perception, and space the form of the perceived; then the connection of the two would probably have revealed itself to him. Space is continuously "becoming." While we gaze into the distance with our senses, it floats around us; but when we are startled, the alert eye sees a tense and rigid space. This space *is;* the principle of its existing at all is *that* it is, outside time and detached from it and from life. In it duration, a piece of perished time, resides as a known property of things. And, as we know ourselves, too, as *being* in this space, we know that we also have a duration and a limit, of which the moving finger of our clock ceaselessly warns us. But the rigid Space itself is transient too – at the first relaxation of our intellectual tension it vanishes from the many-coloured spread of our world-around – and so it is a sign and symbol of *the most elemental and powerful symbol*, of life itself.

The involuntary and unqualified realization of depth dominates the consciousness with the force of an elemental event *simultaneously with the awakening of the inner life.* It marks the frontier between child and . . . Man. The symbolic experience of depth is what is lacking in the child, who grasps at the moon, and knows as yet no meaning in the outer world. Of course the child is not without experience of the extended, of a very simple kind. But

there is no *world-perception;* distance is felt, but it does not yet speak to the soul. With the soul's awakening, direction, too, first reaches living expression. With it alone do we become members of a particular Culture, whose members are connected by a common world-feeling and a common world-form derived from it. A deep identity unites the awakening of the *soul*, its birth into clear existence in the name of a Culture, with the sudden realization of distance and time, the *birth of its outer world* through the symbol of extension. Thenceforth this symbol is and remains the *prime symbol* of that life, imparting to it its specific style and the historical form in which it progressively actualizes its inward possibilities.

From the specific directedness is derived the specific prime-symbol of extension. For the Classical world-view it was the near, strictly limited, self-contained Body. For the Western, it is infinitely wide and infinitely profound three-dimensional Space. For the Arabian, it was the world as a Cavern.

And therewith an old philosophical problem dissolves into nothing: this prime form of the world is *innate* in so far as it is an original possession of the soul of that Culture which is expressed by our life as a whole, and *acquired* in so far that every individual soul re-enacts for itself that creative act, and unfolds in early childhood the symbol of depth to which its existence is predestined, as the emerging butterfly unfolds its wings.

The first comprehension of depth is *an act of birth* – the spiritual complement of the bodily. In it the Culture is born out of its mother-landscape, and the act is repeated by every one of its individual souls throughout its life-course. This is what Plato – connecting it with an early

Hellenic belief—called anamnesis. The definiteness of the world-form, which for each dawning soul *suddenly is*, derives meaning from Becoming. Kant the systematic, however, with his conception of the form *a priori*, would approach the interpretation of this very riddle from a dead result instead of along a living way.

From now on, we shall consider the *kind of extension as the prime symbol of a Culture*. From it we are to deduce the entire form-language of its actuality; its physiognomy as contrasted with the physiognomy of every other Culture and, still more, with the almost entire lack of physiognomy in primitive man's world-around.

For now the interpretation of depth rises to acts, to formative expression in works, to the *trans*-forming of actuality, not now merely in order to subserve necessities of life — as in the case of the animals — but above all to create a picture out of extensional elements of all sorts (material, line, colour, tone, motion). It is a picture, often, that reemerges with power to charm after lost centuries in the world-picture of another Culture, and tells new men of the way in which its authors understood the world.

The prime symbol is operative through the form-sense of every man, every community, age and epoch, and dictates the style of every life-expression. It is inherent in the form of the state, the religious myths and cults, the ethical ideals, the forms of painting and music and poetry, the fundamental notions of each science. But it is not presented by these. Consequently, it is not presentable by words, for language and words are themselves *derived* symbols. Every individual symbol tells of it, but only to the inner feelings, not to the understanding.

And when we say, as henceforth we shall say, that the

prime-symbol of the Classical soul is the material and individual body, and that of the Western is pure infinite space, it must always be with the reservation that concepts cannot represent the inconceivable, and thus at the most a *significative feeling* may be evoked by the sound of words.

In the Indian Culture we have the perfectly ahistoric soul. Its decisive expression is the Brahman Nirvana. There is no pure Indian astronomy, no calendar, and therefore no history, so far as history is the track of a conscious spiritual evolution. The world-consciousness of Indian man was so ahistorically built that it could not even treat the appearance of a book written by a single author as an event determinate in time. Instead of an organic series of writings by specific persons, there came into being gradually a vague mass of texts into which everyone inserted what he pleased; and notions such as those of intellectual individualism, intellectual evolution, intellectual epochs, played no part in the matter. It is in this *anonymous* form that we possess the Indian philosophy – which is at the same time all the Indian history that we have.

The Egyptian soul saw itself as moving down a narrow and inexorably-prescribed life-path to come at the end before the judges of the dead. That was its *Destiny-idea.* The Egyptian's existence is that of the traveller who follows one unchanging direction, and the whole form-language of his Culture is a translation into the sensible of this one theme. And as we have taken *endless space* as the prime symbol of the West, and *body* as that of the Classical, so we may take the word *way* as most intelligibly expressing that of the Egyptians.

Strangely, and for Western thought almost incomprehensibly, the one element in extension that they emphasize is that of direction in depth. The tomb-temples of the Old Kingdom, and especially the mighty pyramid-temples of the Fourth Dynasty, do not represent a purposed organization of space such as we find in the mosque and the cathedral, but a rhythmically ordered *sequence* of spaces. The sacred way leads from the gate-building on the Nile through passages, halls, arcaded courts and pillared rooms that grow ever narrower and narrower, to the chamber of the dead. And similarly the Sun-temples of the Fifth Dynasty are not " buildings " but a path enclosed by mighty masonry. The reliefs and the paintings appear always as rows which, with an impressive compulsion, lead the beholder in a definite direction. The ram and sphinx avenues of the New Empire have the same object. For the Egyptian, the depth-experience which governed his world-form was so emphatically directional that he comprehended space more or less as a continuous process of actualization. Thus the Egyptian experienced space, we may say, in and by the processional march along its distinct elements; whereas the Greek who sacrificed *outside* the temple did not feel it; and the man of our Gothic centuries praying in the cathedral let himself be immersed in the quiet infinity of it.

The world, as spread out for the Magian waking-consciousness, possesses a kind of extension that may be called cavern-like – though it is difficult for Western man to pick upon any word that can convey anything more than a hint of the meaning of Magian " space." For " space " has essentially unlike meanings for the perceptions of the two Cultures. The world-as-cavern is just as different from

the world-as-extent of the passionate, far-thrusting Faustian, as it is from the Classical world-as-sum-of-bodily-things. The Copernican system – in which the earth, as it were, loses itself – must necessarily seem crazy and frivolous to Arabian thought. The Church of the West was perfectly right when it resisted an idea so incompatible with the world-feeling of Jesus. And the Chaldean *cavern-astronomy*, which was wholly natural and convincing for Persians, Jews, and Islam, became accessible to the few genuine Greeks who knew of it at all only after a process of transvaluing its basic notions of space.

Infinite space is the ideal that the Western soul has always striven to find, and to see immediately actualized, in its world-around. Hence it is that the countless space-theories of the last centuries possess – over and above all ostensible "results" – a deep import as symptoms of a world-feeling.

How far does unlimited extension *underlie* all objective things? There is hardly a single problem that has been more earnestly pondered than this. It would almost seem as if every other world-question was dependent upon the one problem of the nature of space. And is it not in fact so – *for us*? The whole Classical world never expended one word on it, and indeed did not even possess a word by which the problem could be exactly outlined. Why had the great pre-Socratics nothing to say on it? The answer is in the very fact of silence. The "eternal problem" that Kant, in the name of humanity, tackled with a passion that itself is symbolic, is a *purely Western* problem that simply does not arise in the intellects of other Cultures.

Classical man, whose insight into his own world-around was certainly not less piercing than ours, regarded as the

prime problem of all being the problem of ἀρχή – the *material origin and foundation* of all sensuously-perceptible things. If we grasp this, we shall get close to the significance of the fact – not the fact of space; but the fact that made it a necessity of destiny for the space-problem to become the problem of the Western, and only the Western, soul. This fact is implicit in Euclid's famous parallel axiom: "Through a point only one parallel to a straight line is possible."

This was the only one of the Classical theorems which remained unproved. And as we know now, it is incapable of proof. But it was just that which made it into a dogma, as opposed to any experience, *and therefore the metaphysical centre* and main girder of that geometrical system. Everything else, axiom or postulate, is merely introductory or corollary to this. This one proposition is necessary and universally-valid for the Classical intellect, *and yet not deducible.* What does this signify?

It signifies that the statement is a *symbol* of the first rank. It contains the structure of Classical corporeality. It is just this proposition – theoretically the weakest link in the Classical geometry – that reveals its soul. And it was just this proposition, self-evident within the limits of routine experience, that the Faustian number-thinking, derived from incorporeal spatial distances, fastened upon as the centre of doubt. It is one of the deepest symbols of *our* being that we have opposed to the Euclidean geometry not one but *several* other geometries, all of which for us are equally true and self-consistent.

This very spatiality that is the truest and sublimest element in the aspect of *our* universe, that absorbs into itself and begets out of itself the substantiality of all things,

Classical humanity knows no word for, and therefore has no idea of. With one accord it cuts this out as the nonent, τὸ μὴ ὄν, that which *is not*. The pathos of this denial can scarcely be exaggerated. The whole passion of the Classical soul is in this act of excluding by symbolic negation that which it *would* not feel as actual, that in which its own existence *could* not be expressed.

A world of other colour suddenly confronts us here. The Classical statue in its splendid bodiliness — all structure and expressive surfaces and no incorporeal *arrière-pensée* whatsoever — contains without remainder all that Actuality is for the Classical eye. The material, the optically definite, the comprehensible, the immediately present — this list exhausts the characteristics of this kind of extension. The Classical universe, the *Cosmos* or well-ordered aggregate of all near and completely viewable things, is concluded by the corporeal vault of heaven. More there is not.

The need that is in us to think of "space" as being behind as well as before this shell was wholly absent from the Classical world-feeling. The Stoics went so far as to treat even properties and relations of things as "bodies." For Chrysippus, the Divine Pneuma is a "body." For Democritus, seeing consists in our being penetrated by material particles of the things seen. The State is a body which is made up of all the bodies of its citizens. The law knows only corporeal persons and material things. And the feeling finds its last and noblest expression in the stone body of the Classical temple. The windowless interior is carefully concealed by the array of columns; but outside there is not one truly straight line to be found. Every flight of steps has a slight sweep outward, every step rela-

tively to the next. The pediment, the roof-ridge, the sides are all curved. Every column has a slight swell and none stands truly vertical or truly equidistant from another. But swell and inclination and distance vary from the corners to the centres of the sides in a carefully toned-off ratio, and so the whole corpus is given a something that swings mysterious about a centre. The curvatures are so fine that to a certain extent they are invisible to the eye and only to be "sensed." But it is just by these means that direction in depth is eliminated. While the Gothic style *soars*, the Ionic *hovers*.

The interior of the cathedral pulls up with primeval force, but the temple is laid down in majestic rest. All this is equally true as relating to the Faustian and Apollinian Deity, and likewise of the fundamental ideas of the respective physics. To the principles of position, material and form we have opposed those of straining movement, force and mass. And we have defined the last-named as a constant ratio between force and acceleration, nay, finally volatilized both in the purely spatial elements of *capacity* and *intensity*.

It was an obligatory consequence, of this way of conceiving actuality, that the instrumental music of the great 18th-century masters should emerge as a master-art. For it is the only one of the arts whose form-world is inwardly related to the contemplative vision of pure space. In it, as opposed to the statues of Classical temple and forum, we have bodiless realms of tone, tone-intervals, tone-seas. The orchestra swells, breaks, and ebbs, it depicts distances, lights, shadows, storms, driving clouds, lightning flashes, colours etherealized and transcendent – think of the instrumentation of Gluck and Beethoven.

" Contemporary," in our sense, with the Canon of Polycletus – the treatise in which the great sculptor laid down the strict rules of human body-build which remained authoritative till beyond Lysippus – we find the strict canon (completed by Stamitz about 1740) of the sonata-movement of four elements. It begins to relax in late-Beethoven quartets and symphonies and, finally, in the lonely, utterly infinitesimal tone-world of the " Tristan " music, frees itself from all earthly comprehensibleness. This prime feeling of a loosing, solution, of the Soul in the Infinite, of a liberation from all material heaviness which the highest moments of our music always awaken, sets free also the energy of depth that is in the Faustian soul. Whereas the effect of the Classical art-work is to bind and to bound, and brings back the eye from distance to a Near and Still that is saturated with beauty.

Each of the great Cultures has arrived at a secret language of world-feeling that is only fully comprehensible by him whose soul belongs to that Culture. We must not deceive ourselves. Perhaps we can read a little way into the Classical soul, because its form-language is almost the exact inversion of the Western; how far we have succeeded, or can ever succeed, is a question which necessarily forms the starting-point of all criticism of the Renaissance, and it is a very difficult one.

But when we are told that probably (it is at best a doubtful venture to meditate upon so alien an expression of Being) the Indians conceived numbers which according to our ideas possessed neither value nor magnitude nor relativity – and which only became positive and negative,

great or small units, in virtue of position – we have to admit that it is impossible for us exactly to re-experience what spiritually underlies this kind of number.

For us, 3 is always *something*, be it positive or negative. For the Greeks it was unconditionally a positive magnitude, $+3$.

For the Indian it indicates a possibility without existence, to which the word "something" is *not yet* applicable, outside both existence and non-existence which are *properties* to be introduced into it. Thus $+3$, -3, $\frac{1}{3}$, are emanating actualities of subordinate rank which reside in the mysterious substance (3) in some way that is entirely hidden from us. It takes a Brahmanic soul to perceive these numbers as self-evident, as ideal emblems of a self-complete world-form. To us they are as unintelligible as is the Brahman Nirvana, lying beyond life *and* death, sleep *and* waking, passion *and* dispassion – and yet somehow actual. Only this spirituality could originate the grand conception of *nothingness as a true number, zero.*

This zero, which probably contains a suggestion of the *Indian* idea of extension – of that spatiality of the world that is treated in the Upanishads and is entirely alien to our space-consciousness – was of course wholly absent in the Classical. By way of the Arabian mathematics (which completely transformed its meaning) it reached the West. It was only introduced in 1554 by Stipel, with its sense, moreover, again fundamentally changed; for it became the mean of $+1$ and -1 as a cut in a linear continuum, i.e., it was assimilated to the Western number-world in a wholly un-Indian sense of *relation.*

Arabian thinkers of the ripest period – and they included minds of the very first order like Alfarabi and Al-

kabi – in controverting the ontology of Aristotle, *proved* that the body as such did not necessarily assume space for existence, and deduced the essence of this space – the *Arabian* kind of extension, that is – from the characteristic of " one's being in a position."

But this does not prove that as against Aristotle and Kant they were in error, or that their thinking was muddled (as we so readily say of what our own brains cannot take in). It shows that the Arabian spirit possessed other world-categories than our own. They could have rebutted Kant, or Kant them, with the same subtlety of proof – and both disputants would have remained convinced of the correctness of their respective standpoints.

When we talk of space today, we are all thinking more or less in the same style, just as we are all using the same languages and word-signs, whether we are considering mathematical space or physical space or the space of painting or that of actuality.

But no Hellene or Egyptian or Chinaman could re-experience any part of those feelings of ours, and no art-work or thought-system could possibly convey to him unequivocally what " space " means for us. The master-traits of thought, life and world-consciousness are as manifold and different as the features of individual men. In those respects, as in others, there are distinctions of " races " and " peoples "; and men are as unconscious of these distinctions as they are ignorant of whether " red " and " yellow " do or do not mean the same for others as for themselves. It is particularly the common symbol of language that nourishes the illusion of a homogeneous constitution of human inner-life and an identical world-form. In this respect the great thinkers of one and another Cul-

ture resemble the colour-blind, in that each is unaware of his own condition and smiles at the errors of the rest.

The actual designation of the Faustian principle, which belongs to us and to us alone, is a matter of indifference. A name is in itself mere sound. Space, too, is a word that is capable of being employed with a thousand nuances — by mathematicians and philosophers, poets and painters — to express one and the same indescribable; a word that is ostensibly common to all mankind and yet, carrying a metaphysical under-meaning that we gave it and could not but give it, is in that sense valid only for our Culture.

It is not the notion of "Will," but the circumstance that we possess it, while the Greeks *were entirely ignorant of it*, that gives it high symbolic import. At the very bottom, there is no distinction between space-as-depth and will. For the one, and *therefore* for the other also, the Classical languages had no expression.

The pure space of the Faustian world-picture is not mere extension, but efficient extension into the distance, as an overcoming of the merely sensuous, as a strain and tendency, as a spiritual will-to-power. I am fully aware how inadequate these periphrases are. It is entirely impossible to indicate in exact terms the difference between what we and what the men of the Indian or the Arabian Culture call space, or feel or imagine in the word. But that there *is* some radical distinction is proved by the very different fundamentals of the respective mathematics, arts of form, and, above all, immediate utterances of *life*.

We see how the identity of space and will comes to expression in the acts of Copernicus and Columbus — as well as in those of the Hohenstaufen and Napoleon. It underlies also, in another way, the physical notions of fields of

force and potential, ideas that it would be impossible to convey to the comprehension of any Greek. " Space as *a priori* form of perception," the formula in which Kant finally enunciated that for which Baroque philosophy had so long and tirelessly striven, implies an assertion of supremacy of soul over the alien. The ego, through the form, is to rule the world.

This is brought to expression in the depth-perspective of oil-painting which makes the space-field of the picture, conceived as infinite, dependent on the observer; he, in choosing his distance, asserts his dominion.

It is this attraction of distance that produces the type of the *heroic and historically-felt* landscape that we have alike in the picture and the park of the Baroque period, and that is expressed also in the mathematico-physical concept of the vector. For centuries painting fought passionately to reach this symbol, which contains all that the words space, will and force are capable of indicating.

The relation of our will to our imaginary space is evidenced again in the physical concept of space-energy — that utterly un-Classical idea in which even *spatial interval* figures as a form, and indeed as prime form, for the notions of " capacity " and " intensity " rest upon it.

It is wrong, though it may be usual, to regard the cult of the " will " as common, if not to mankind, at any rate to Christendom, and derived in consequence from the Early-Arabian ethos. The connection is merely a phenomenon of the historical surface. The deduction fails because it confuses the history of words and ideas such as " voluntas " with the course of their destiny, thereby missing the profoundly symbolical changes of connotation that occur in that course. When Arabian psychologists — Murtada for

instance – discuss the possibility of several " wills," a will that hangs together with the act, another will that independently precedes the act, another that has no relation to the act at all, a will that is simply the parent of a willing, they are obviously working in deeper connotations of the Arabic word and on the basis of a soul-image that in structure differs entirely from the Faustian.

The concepts " force," " mass," " will," " passion " rest not on objective experience but on a life-feeling. Darwinism is nothing but a specially shallow formulation of this feeling. No Greek would have used the word " Nature " as our biology employs it, in the sense of an absolute and methodical activity. " The will of God " for us is a pleonasm – God (or " Nature," as some say) is nothing but will. After the Renaissance the notion of God sheds the old sensuous and personal traits (omnipresence and omnipotence are almost mathematical concepts), becomes little by little identical with the notion of infinite space, and in becoming so becomes transcendent world-will.

And *therefore* it is that about 1700 painting has to yield to instrumental music – the only art that in the end is capable of clearly expressing what we feel about God. Consider, in contrast with this, the gods of Homer.

Whatever is sensuously-near is understandable for all. And therefore of all the Cultures that have been, the Classical is the most popular, and the Faustian the least popular, in its expressions of life-feeling. A creation is " popular " that gives itself with all its secrets to the first comer at the first glance – that incorporates its meaning in its exterior and surface. In any Culture, that element is " popular "

which has come down unaltered from primitive states and imaginings; which a man understands from childhood, without having to *master by effort* any really novel method or standpoint. Generally it is that which is immediately and frankly evident to the senses, as against that which is merely hinted at and has to be discovered – by the few, and sometimes the very, very few. There are popular ideas, works, men and landscapes. Every Culture has its own quite definite sort of esoteric or popular character that is immanent in all its doings, so far as these have symbolic importance. The commonplace eliminates differences of spiritual breadth as well as depth between man and man, while the esoteric emphasizes and strengthens them. The purely "popular" and naïve associates itself with the symbol of the bodily. To the symbol of endless Space belongs a frankly *un*-popular relation between the creations and the men of the Culture.

The Classical geometry is that of the child, that of any layman – Euclid's Elements are used in England as a school-book to this day. The workaday mind will always regard this as the only true and correct geometry. All other kinds of natural geometry that are possible (and have in fact, by an immense effort of overcoming the popular-obvious, been discovered) are understandable only for the circle of the professional mathematicians. Everything that is Classical is comprehensible in *one* glance, be it the Doric temple, the statue, the Polis, the cults; backgrounds and secrets there are none. But compare a Gothic cathedral-façade with the Propylæa; an etching with a vase-painting; the policy of the Athenian people with that of the modern Cabinet. Consider what it means that every one of our epoch-making works of poetry, policy and sci-

ence has called forth a whole literature of explanations, and not indubitably successful explanations at that.

While the Parthenon sculptures were " there " for every Hellene, the music of Bach and his contemporaries was only for musicians. We have the types of the Rembrandt expert, the Dante scholar, the expert in contrapuntal music. And it is a reproach — a justifiable reproach — to Wagner that it was possible for far too many people to be Wagnerians, that far too little of his music was for the trained musician. But do we hear of Phidias-experts or even Homer-scholars?

Herein lies the explanation of a set of phenomena which we have hitherto been inclined to treat — in a vein of moral philosophy, or, better, of melodrama — as weaknesses common to humanity. But they are in fact symptoms of the Western life-feeling. The " misunderstood " artist, the poet " left to starve," the " derided discoverer," the thinker who is " centuries in advance of his time," and so on, are types of an esoteric Culture. Destinies of this sort have their basis in the passion of distance in which is concealed the desire-to-infinity and the will-to-power. And they are as necessary in the field of Faustian mankind — at all stages — as they are unthinkable in the Apollinian.

Every high creator in Western history has in reality aimed, from first to last, at something which only the few could comprehend. Michelangelo made the remark that his style was ordained for the correction of fools. Gauss concealed his discovery of non-Euclidean geometry for thirty years, for fear of the " clamour of the Bœotians." It is only today that we are separating out the masters of Gothic cathedral art from the rank-and-file. But the same applies also to every painter, statesman, philosopher. Think

of Giordano Bruno, or Leibniz, or Kant, as against Anaximander, Heraclitus or Protagoras. What does it mean, that no German philosopher worth mentioning can be understood by the man in the street, and that the combination of simplicity with majesty that is Homer's is simply not to be found in any Western language? The Nibelungenlied is a hard, reserved utterance, and as for Dante, in Germany at any rate the pretension to understand him is seldom more than a literary pose.

We find everywhere in the Western what we find nowhere in the Classical – the exclusive form. Whole periods – for instance, the Provençal Culture and the Rococo – are in the highest degree select and uninviting, their ideas and forms having no existence except for a small class of higher men.

Even the Renaissance is no exception, for though it purports to be the rebirth of that Antique which is so utterly *non*-exclusive and caters so frankly for all, it is in fact, through-and-through, the creation of a circle or of individual chosen souls, a taste that rejects popularity from the outset. How deep this sense of detachment goes we can tell from the case of Florence, where the generality of the people viewed the works of the elect with indifference, or with open mouths, or with dislike, and sometimes, as in the case of Savonarola, turned and rent them.

On the contrary, *every* Attic burgher belonged to the Attic Culture, which excluded nobody. And consequently, the distinctions of deeps and shallows, which are so decisively important for us, did not exist at all for it. For us, popular and shallow are synonymous – in art as in science. But for Classical man it was not so.

Consider our sciences too. Every one of them, without

exception, has besides its elementary groundwork certain "higher" regions that are inaccessible to the layman — symbols, these also, of our will-to-infinity and directional energy. The public for whom the last chapters of up-to-date physics have been written numbers at the utmost a thousand persons, and certain problems of modern mathematics are accessible only to a much smaller circle still — for our "popular" science is without value, *détraquée*, and falsified. We have not only an art for artists; but also a mathematic for mathematicians; a religion for the "religious genius"; a poetry for philosophers; a politic for politicians (of which the *profanum vulgus* of newspaper-readers has not the smallest inkling). The great mass of Socialists would cease to be Socialists if they could understand the Socialism of the nine or ten men who today grasp it with the full historical consequences that it involves.

Indeed, we may take the craving for wide effect as a sufficient index by itself of the commencing and already perceptible decline of Western science. That the severe esoteric of the Baroque Age is felt now as a burden, is a symptom of sinking strength and of the dulling of that distance-sense which *confessed* the limitation with humility. Few sciences have kept the old fineness, depth, and energy of conclusion and deduction and have not been tainted with journalism; theoretical physics, mathematics, Catholic dogma, and perhaps jurisprudence exhaust the list. These few address themselves to a very narrow and chosen band of experts. *And it is this expert, and his opposite the layman, that are totally lacking in the Classical life, wherein everyone knows everything.* For us, the polarity of expert and layman has all the significance of a

high symbol. And when the tension of this distance is beginning to slacken, there the Faustian life is fading out.

The conclusion to be argued from this as regards the advances of Western science in its last phase (which will cover, or quite possibly will *not* cover, the next two centuries) is this: In proportion as megalopolitan shallowness and triviality drive arts and sciences on to the bookstall and into the factory, the posthumous spirit of the Culture will confine itself more and more to very narrow circles. There, remote from advertisement, it will work in ideas and forms so abstruse that only a mere handful of superfine intelligences will be capable of attaching meanings to them.

In no Classical art-work is a relation with the beholder attempted, for that would require the form-language of the individual object to affirm and to make use of the existence of a relation between that object and ambient unlimited space. An Attic statue is a completely Euclidean body, timeless and relationless, wholly self-contained. It neither speaks nor looks. It is *quite unconscious of the spectator.* Unlike the plastic forms of every other Culture, it stands wholly for itself and fits into no architectural order; it is an individual amongst individuals, a body amongst bodies. And the living individuals merely perceive it *as a neighbour,* and do not feel it as an invasive influence, an efficient capable of traversing space. Thus is expressed the Apollinian life-feeling.

Consider Western painting as it was after Leonardo, fully conscious of its mission. How does it deal with infinite space as something *singular* which comprehends both

picture and spectator as mere centres of gravity of a spatial dynamic? The full Faustian life-feeling, the passion of the third dimension, takes hold of the form of the picture, the painted plane, and transforms it in an unheard-of way. The picture no longer stands for itself, nor looks at the spectator, but *takes him into its sphere*. The sector defined by the sides of the frame – the peepshow-field, twin with the stage-field – represents universal space itself. Foreground and background lose all tendency to materiality and propinquity, and disclose instead of marking off. Far horizons deepen the field to infinity; the colour-treatment of the close foreground eliminates the ideal plane of separation formed by the canvas, and thus expands the field so that the spectator is *in* it. It is not he, now, who chooses the standpoint from which the picture is most effective; on the contrary, the picture dictates position and distance to him. Lateral limits, too, are done away with – from 1500 onwards overrunnings of the frame are more and more frequent and daring. The Greek spectator stands *before* the fresco of Polygnotus. We *sink into* a picture; we are pulled into it by the power of the space-treatment. Unity of space being thus re-established, the infinity that is expanded in all direction by the picture is ruled by the Western perspective; and from perspective there runs a road straight to the comprehension of our astronomical world-picture and its passionate pioneering into unending farness.

So also it was that the old Northern races, in whose primitive souls the Faustian was already awakening, discovered in their grey dawn the art of *sailing the seas* which emancipated them. The Egyptians knew the sail, but only profited by it as a labour-saving device. They sailed, as

they had done before in their oared ships, along the coast to Punt and Syria, but the *idea* of the high-seas voyage – what it meant as a liberation, a symbol – was not in them. Sailing, real sailing, is a triumph over Euclidean land. At the beginning of our 14th century, almost coincident with each other (and with the formation-periods of oil-painting and counterpoint!) came gunpowder and the compass, that is, *long-range weapons and long-range intercourse* – (means that the Chinese Culture too had, necessarily, discovered for itself).

It was the spirit of the Vikings and the Hansa, as of those dim peoples, so unlike the Hellenes with their domestic funerary urns, who heaped up great barrows as memorials of the lonely soul on the wide plains. It was the spirit of those who sent their dead kings to sea in their burning ships, thrilling manifests of their dark yearning for the boundless. The spirit of the Norsemen drove their cockle-boats – in the Tenth Century that heralded the Faustian birth – to the coasts of America. But to the circumnavigation of Africa, already achieved by Egyptians and Carthaginians, Classical mankind was wholly indifferent.

The event which stands at the same cultural level as the discoveries of the Spaniards and Portuguese is that of the Hellenic colonizations of the 8th century B.C. But the Greeks went carefully, point by point, on the known tracks of the Phœnicians, Carthaginians and Etruscans; and their curiosity in no wise extended to what lay beyond the Pillars of Hercules and the Isthmus of Suez, easily accessible as both were to them.

The existence of the Polis, that astonishing ideal of the

State as statue, was in truth nothing more nor less than a refuge from the wide world of the sea-peoples – though the Classical, alone of all the Cultures so far, had a ring of coasts about a sea of islands, and not a continental expanse, as its motherland. Hellenism, with all its proneness to technical diversions, did not even free itself from the oared ship which tethered the mariner to the coasts. The naval architects of Alexandria were capable of constructing giant ships of 260-ft. length, and, for that matter, the steamship was discovered in principle. But there are some discoveries that have all the pathos of a great and *necessary* symbol and reveal depths within; and there are others that are merely play of intellect. The steamship is for Apollinians one of the latter, and for Faustians one of the former class. It is prominence or insignificance in the Macrocosm as a whole that gives discovery and the application thereof the character of depth or shallowness.

The discoveries of Columbus and Vasco da Gama extended the geographical horizon without limit; and the world-sea came into the same relation with land as that of the universe of space with earth. And then first the political tension within the Faustian world-consciousness discharged itself. For the Greeks, Hellas was and remained the important part of the earth's surface. But with the discovery of America West-Europe became a province in a gigantic whole. Thenceforward the history of the Western Culture has a *planetary* character.

The bent of the Faustian Culture, therefore, was overpoweringly towards *extension*, political, economic or spiritual. It overrode all geographical-material bounds. It sought – without any practical object, merely for the

Symbol's own sake – to reach North Pole and South Pole. It ended by transforming the entire surface of the globe into a single colonial and economic system.

Classical man, for inward reasons, could not be a conqueror, notwithstanding Alexander's romantic expedition. Greek daughter-cities were planted by the hundred along the rim of the Mediterranean; but not one of them made the slightest real attempt to conquer and penetrate the hinterlands. To settle far from the coast would have meant to lose sight of " home "; to settle in *loneliness* – the ideal life of the trapper and prairie-man of America, as it had been of Icelandic saga-heroes long before – was something entirely beyond the possibilities of Classical mankind.

Dramas like that of the emigration to America, man by man, each on his own account, driven by deep promptings to loneliness; or the Spanish Conquest; or the Californian gold-rush; dramas of uncontrollable longings for freedom, solitude, immense independence, and of giantlike contempt of all limitations whatsoever upon the home-feeling – these dramas are Faustian and only Faustian. No other Culture, not even the Chinese, knows them.

Every thinker from Meister Eckhardt to Kant willed to subject the " phenomenal " world to the asserted domination of the cognizing ego, and every leader from Otto the Great to Napoleon did it. The *genuine* object of their ambitions was the boundless – alike for the great Franks and Hohenstaufen with their world-monarchies; for Gregory VII and Innocent III; for the Spanish Habsburgs " on whose empire the sun never set "; and for the Imperialism of today, on behalf of which the World-War was fought – and will continue to be fought for many a long day.

PART III

OUR AGE AND ITS FUTURE

CHAPTER I

THE LIFE OF THE CITY

> "*And then there suddenly emerges a phenomenon that has long been preparing itself underground, and now steps forward to make an end of the drama* – the sterility of civilized man."

PRIMEVAL man is a *ranging* animal, keen and anxious in its senses, ever alert to drive off some element of hostile Nature. A deep transformation sets in first with agriculture. He who digs and ploughs is seeking not to plunder, but to *alter* Nature. To plant implies, not to take something, but to produce something. *But with this, man himself becomes plant* – namely, as peasant. He roots in the earth that he tends. The soul of man discovers a soul in the countryside. A new earth-boundness of being, a new feeling, pronounces itself. Hostile Nature becomes the friend; earth becomes *Mother* Earth. Between sowing and begetting, harvest and death, the child and the grain, a profound affinity is set up.

As completed expression of this life-feeling, we find everywhere the *symbolic shape of the farmhouse*, which in

the disposition of the rooms and in every line of external form tells us about the blood of its inhabitants. The peasant's dwelling is the great symbol of settledness. It is itself plant, thrusts its roots deep into its " own " soil. It is *property* in the most sacred sense of the word.

This is the condition precedent of every Culture, which itself in turn grows up out of a mother-landscape and renews and intensifies the intimacy of man and soil. What his cottage is to the peasant, the town is to the Culture-man. As each individual house has its kindly spirits, so each town has its tutelary god or saint. The town, too, is a plantlike being, as far removed as a peasantry is from nomadism and the purely microcosmic.

Hence the development of a high form-language is linked always to a landscape. Neither an art nor a religion can alter the site of its growth; only in the Civilization with its giant cities do we come again to despise and disengage ourselves from these roots. Man as civilized, as *intellectual nomad*, is again wholly microcosmic, wholly homeless, as free *intellectually* as hunter and herdsman were free sensually. " *Ubi bene, ibi patria* " is valid *before* as well as *after* a Culture.

All great Cultures are town-Cultures. Higher man of the Second Age is a town-tied animal. *World-history is the history of civic man.* Peoples, states, politics, religion, all arts, and all sciences rest upon *one* prime phenomenon of human being, the town. As all thinkers of all Cultures themselves live in the town (even though they may reside bodily in the country), they are perfectly unaware of what a bizarre thing a town is. To feel this we have to put ourselves unreservedly in the place of the wonder-struck primitive who for the first time sees this mass of stone and

wood set in the landscape, with its stone-enclosed streets and its stone-paved squares – a domicile, truly, of strange form and strangely teeming with men!

But the real miracle is the birth of the *soul* of a town. A mass-soul of a wholly new kind – whose last foundations will remain hidden from us for ever – suddenly buds off from the general spirituality of its Culture. As soon as it is awake, it forms for itself a visible body. Out of the rustic group of farms and cottages, each of which has its own history, arises a *totality*. And the whole lives, breathes, grows, and acquires a face and an inner form and history.

Thenceforward, in addition to the individual house, the temple, the cathedral, and the palace, the town-figure itself becomes a unit objectively expressing the form-language and style-history that accompanies the Culture throughout its life-course.

It goes without saying that what distinguishes a town from a village is not size, but the presence of a soul.

We have to go back and sense accurately what it means when out of a primitive Egyptian or Chinese or Germanic village – a little spot in a wide land – a city comes into being. It is quite possibly not differentiated in any outward feature, but spiritually it is *a place from which the countryside is henceforth regarded, felt, and experienced as "environs,"* as something different and subordinate.

From now on there are two lives, that of the inside and that of the outside, and the peasant understands this just as clearly as the townsman. The village smith and the smith in the city, the village headman and the burgomaster, live in two different worlds. The man of the land and the man of the city are different essences.

First of all they feel the difference; then they are domi-

nated by it; and at last they cease to understand each other at all. Today a Brandenburg peasant is closer to a Sicilian peasant than he is to a Berliner. From the moment of this specific attunement, the City comes into being. It is this attunement which underlies the entire waking-consciousness of every Culture.

The men of the pre-Culture are filled with a deep uneasiness in the presence of these types, with which they cannot get into any inward relation. On the Rhine and the Danube the Germans frequently, as at Strassburg, settled down at the gates of Roman cities that remained uninhabited. In Crete the conquerors built, on the ruins of the burnt-out cities like Gournia and Cnossus — villages.

It is a sign that the countryside is still unconditionally supreme, and does not yet recognize the city, when the ruler shifts his court every spring from palace to palace. In the Egyptian Old Kingdom the thickly-populated centre of the administration was at the "White Wall" (Memphis); but the residences of the Pharaohs changed incessantly, as in Sumerian Babylon and the Carolingian Empire. The Early Chinese rulers of the Chóu dynasty had their court as a rule at Lo-Yang (the present Ho-nan-fu) from about 1160 B.C.; but it was not until 770 — corresponding to our sixteenth century — that the locality was promoted to be the permanent royal residence.

The new Soul of the City speaks a new language, which soon comes to be tantamount to the language of the Culture itself. The open land with its village-mankind is wounded; it no longer understands that language, it is nonplussed and dumb.

All genuine style-history is played out in the cities. It

is exclusively the city's destiny and the life-experience of urban men that speaks to the eye in the logic of visible forms. The very earliest Gothic was still a growth of the soil, and laid hold of the farmhouse with its inhabitants and its contents. But the Renaissance style flourished only in the Renaissance *city*, the Baroque only in the Baroque *city* — not to mention the wholly megalopolitan Corinthian column or Rococo. There was perhaps some quiet infiltration from these into the landscape. But the land itself was no longer capable of the smallest creative effort — only of dumb aversion. The peasant and his dwelling remained in all essentials Gothic, and Gothic it is to this day. The Hellenic *countryside* preserved the geometric style, the Egyptian village the cast of the Old Kingdom.

It is, above all, the expression of the city's " visage " that has a history. The play of this facial expression, indeed, is almost the spiritual history of the Culture itself.

These stone visages have incorporated in their light-world the humanness of the citizen himself and, like him, are all eye and intellect. How distinct the language of form they talk, how different from the rustic drawl of the landscape! The silhouette of the great city, its roofs and chimneys, the towers and domes on the horizon! What a language is imparted to us through *one* look at Nüremberg or Florence; Damascus or Moscow; Peking or Benares.

What do we know of the Classical cities, seeing that we do not know the lines that they presented under the Southern noon, under clouds in the morning, in the starry night? The courses of the streets, straight or crooked, broad or narrow. The houses, low or tall, bright or dark, that in all Western cities turn their façades, *their faces*, and

in all Eastern cities turn their backs, blank wall and railing, towards the street. The spirit of squares and corners; impasses and prospects; fountains and monuments; churches or temples or mosques; amphitheatres and railway stations; bazaars and town-halls! The suburbs, too, of neat garden-villas or of jumbled blocks of flats, rubbish-heaps and allotments. The fashionable quarter and the slum area; the Subura of Classical Rome and the Faubourg Saint-Germain of Paris; ancient Baiæ and modern Nice; the little town-picture like Bruges and Rothenburg, and the sea of houses like Babylon, Tenochtitlan, Rome, and London!

All this has history and *is* history. One major political event – and the visage of the town falls into different folds. Napoleon gave to Bourbon Paris, Bismarck gave to worthy little Berlin, a new mien. But the Country stands by, uninfluenced, suspicious and irritated.

The village, with its quiet hillocky roofs, its evening smoke, its wells, its hedges, and its beasts, lies completely fused and embedded in the landscape. The country town *confirms* the country, is an intensification of the picture of the country. It is the Late city that first defies the land, contradicts Nature in the lines of its silhouette, *denies* all Nature.

It wants to be something different from and higher than Nature. These high-pitched gables, these Baroque cupolas, spires, and pinnacles, neither are, nor desire to be, related with anything in Nature.

And then begins the gigantic megalopolis, the *city-as-world*, which suffers nothing beside itself, and sets about *annihilating* the country picture. The town that once upon a time humbly accommodated itself to that picture now in-

sists that it shall be the same as itself. *Extra muros*, chaussées and woods and pastures become a park, mountains become tourists' view-points. *Intra muros* arises an imitation Nature, fountains in lieu of springs, flower-beds, formal pools, and clipped hedges in lieu of meadows and ponds and bushes. In a village the thatched roof is still hill-like and the street is of the same nature as the baulk of earth between fields. But here the picture is of deep, long gorges between high, stony houses filled with coloured dust and strange uproar. And men dwell in these houses, the like of which no nature-being has ever conceived. Costumes, even faces, are adjusted to a backbround of stone. By day there is a street traffic of strange colours and tones, and by night a new light that outshines the moon. And the yokel stands helpless on the pavement, understanding nothing and understood by nobody, tolerated as a useful type in farce, and as provider of this world's daily bread.

It follows, however – and this is the most essential point – that we cannot comprehend political and economic history at all unless we realize that the city, with its gradual detachment from and final bankrupting of the country, is the determinative form to which the course and sense of higher history generally conforms. *World-history is city-history.*

We find in every Culture (and very soon) the type of the *capital city*. This, as its name pointedly indicates, is that city whose spirit – with its methods, aims, and decisions of policy and economics – dominates the land. The land with its people is for this controlling spirit a tool and an object. The land does not understand what is going on, and is not even asked. In all countries of all Late Cultures, the great parties, the revolutions, the Cæsarisms, the de-

mocracies, the parliaments, are the form in which the spirit of the capital tells the country what it is expected to desire – and, if called upon, to die for. The Classical forum, the Western press, are, essentially, intellectual engines of the ruling City. Any country-dweller who really understands the meaning of politics in such periods, and feels himself on their level, moves into the City – not perhaps in the body, but certainly in the spirit.

The sentiment and public opinion of the peasant's countryside – so far as it can be said to exist -- is prescribed and guided by the print and speech of the city. Egypt is Thebes, the *orbis terrarum* is Rome, Islam is Baghdad, France is Paris. Gradually Policy gathers itself up into a very few capitals, and everything else retains but a shadow of political existence. Even in the Classical world, the atomizing tendency towards city-states did not hold out against the major movement. As early as the Peloponnesian War it was only Athens and Sparta that were really handling policy. Finally it is the Forum of the City of Rome alone that is the scene of Classical history. Cæsar might campaign in Gaul; his slayers in Macedonia; Anthony in Egypt. But, whatever happened in these fields, *it was from their relation to Rome that events acquired meaning.*

The peasant is historyless. The village stands outside world-history. And all evolution from the "Trojan" to the Mithridatic War, from the Saxon emperors to the World War of 1914, passes by these little points on the landscape, occasionally destroying them and wasting their blood, but never in the least touching their inwardness.

The peasant is the eternal man, independent of every Culture that ensconces itself in the cities. He precedes it,

he outlives it, a dumb creature propagating himself from generation to generation, limited to soil-bound callings and aptitudes – a mystical soul, with a dry, shrewd understanding that sticks to practical matters – the origin and the ever-flowing source of the blood that makes world-history in the cities.

Whatever the Culture up there in the city conceives in the way of state-forms, economic customs, articles of faith, implements, knowledge, art, he receives mistrustfully and hesitatingly. Though in the end he may accept these things, never is he altered in kind thereby. Thus the West-European peasant outwardly took in all the dogmas of the Councils from the great Lateran to that of Trent, just as he took in the products of mechanical engineering and those of the French Revolution. But he remains what he was, what he already was in Charlemagne's day. The present-day piety of the peasant is older than Christianity. His gods are more ancient than those of any higher religion. Remove from him the pressure of the great cities and he will revert to the state of nature without feeling that he is losing anything. His real ethic, his real metaphysic, which no scholar of the city has yet thought it worth while to discover, lie outside all religious and spiritual history, have in fact no history at all.

The city is intellect. It upsets thrones and limits old rights in the name of reason, and above all in the name of "the People," which henceforward means exclusively the people of the city. Democracy is the political form in which the townsman's outlook upon the world is demanded of the peasantry also.

Finally, there arises the monstrous symbol and vessel of the completely emancipated intellect, the world-city — the centre in which the course of a world-history ends by winding itself up. A handful of gigantic places in each Civilization disfranchises and disvalues the entire motherland of its own Culture under the contemptuous name of the "provinces." The "provinces" are now everything whatsoever — land, town, *and* city — except these two or three points. There are no longer noblesse and bourgeoisie, freemen and slaves, Hellenes and Barbarians, believers and unbelievers; *but only cosmopolitans and provincials*. All other contrasts pale before this one, which dominates all events, all habits of life, all views of the world.

The earliest of all world-cities were Babylon and the Thebes of the New Empire — the Minoan world of Crete, for all its splendour, belonged to the Egyptian "provinces." In the Classical the first example is Alexandria, which reduced old Greece at one stroke to the provincial level, and which even Rome, even the resettled Carthage, even Byzantium, could not suppress. In India the giant cities of Ujjaina, Kanauj, and above all Pataliputra were renowned even in China and Java. And everyone knows the fairy-tale reputation of Baghdad and Granada in the West. In the Mexican world, it seems, Uxmal (founded in 950) was the first world-city of the Maya realms, which, however, with the rise of the Toltec world-cities Tezcuco and Tenochtitlan, sank to the level of the provinces.

It should not be forgotten that the word "province" first appears as a constitutional designation given by the Romans to Sicily. The subjugation of Sicily, in fact, is the first example of a once pre-eminent Culture-landscape

sinking so far as to be purely and simply an object. Syracuse, the first real great-city of the Classical world, had flourished when Rome was still an unimportant country town, but thenceforward, *vis-à-vis* Rome, it becomes a provincial city.

In just the same way Habsburg Madrid and Papal Rome, leading cities in the Europe of the seventeenth century, were from the outset of the eighteenth depressed to the provincial level by the world-cities of Paris and London. And the rise of New York to the position of world-city during the Civil War of 1861–5 may perhaps prove to have been the most pregnant event of the nineteenth century.

The stone Colossus "Cosmopolis" stands at the end of the life's course of every great Culture. The Culture-man whom the land has spiritually formed is seized and possessed by his own creation, the City, and is made into its creature, its executive organ, and finally its victim. This stony mass is the *absolute* city. Its image, as it appears with all its grandiose beauty in the light-world of the human eye, contains the whole noble death-symbolism of the definitive thing-become. The spirit-pervaded stone of Gothic buildings, after a millennium of style-evolution, has become the soulless material of this dæmonic stone-desert.

These final cities are *wholly* intellect. Their houses are no longer, as those of the Ionic and the Baroque were, derivatives of the old peasant's house, whence the Culture took its spring into history. They are, generally speaking, no longer houses in which Vesta and Janus, Lares and

Penates, have any sort of footing – but mere premises which have been fashioned, not by blood but by requirements, not by feeling but by the spirit of commercial enterprise.

So long as the hearth has a pious meaning as the actual and genuine centre of a family, the old relation to the land is not wholly extinct. But when *that*, too, follows the rest into oblivion, and the mass of tenants and bed-occupiers in the sea of houses leads a vagrant existence from shelter to shelter like the hunters and pastors of the "pre-" time, then the intellectual nomad is completely developed. This city is a world, is *the* world. Only as a whole, as a human dwelling-place, has it meaning, the houses being merely the stones of which it is assembled.

Now the old mature cities – with their Gothic nucleus of cathedral, town-halls, and high-gabled streets – with their old walls, towers, and gates, ringed about by the Baroque growth of brighter and more elegant patricians' houses, palaces, and hall-churches – begin to overflow in all directions in formless masses. They eat into the decaying country-side with their multiplied barrack-tenements and utility buildings, destroy the noble aspect of the old time by clearances and rebuildings.

Looking down from one of the old towers upon the sea of houses, we perceive in this petrification of a historic being the exact epoch that marks the end of organic growth, and the beginning of an inorganic and therefore unrestrained process of massing without limit.

And now, too, appears that artificial, mathematical, utterly land-alien product of a pure intellectual satisfaction in the appropriate, the city of the city-architect. In all Civilizations alike, these cities aim at the chessboard form,

which is the symbol of soullessness. Regular rectangle-blocks astounded Herodotus in Babylon, and Cortez in Tenochtitlan. In the Classical world the series of "abstract" cities begins with Thurii, which was "planned" by Hippodamus of Miletus in 441. Priene, whose chess-board scheme entirely ignores the ups and downs of the site, Rhodes, and Alexandria follow – and become in turn models for innumerable provincial cities of the Imperial Age. The Islamic architects laid out Baghdad from 762, and the giant city of Samarra a century later, according to plan. In the West-European and American world the lay-out of Washington in 1791 is the first big example. There can be no doubt that the world-cities of the Han period in China and the Maurya dynasty in India possessed this same geometrical pattern.

Even now the world-cities of the Western Civilization are far from having reached the peak of their development. I see, long after A.D. 2000, cities laid out for ten to twenty million inhabitants, spread over enormous areas of country-side, with buildings that will dwarf the biggest of today's, and notions of traffic and communication that we should regard as fantastic to the point of madness.

Even in this final shape of his being, the Classical man's form-ideal remained the corporeal point. The giant cities of our own present confess our irresistible tendency towards the infinite – with suburbs and garden cities invading the wide country-side, our vast and comprehensive network of roads, and within the thickly built areas a controlled fast traffic on, below, and above straight, broad streets. But the genuine Classical world-city ever strove, not to expand, but to thicken – with streets narrow and cramped, impossible for fast traffic (although this was

fully developed on the great Roman roads), and entire unwillingness to live in suburbs or even to make suburbs possible. Even at that stage the city must needs be a body, thick and round, σῶμα in the strictest sense.

The syncœcism that in the early Classical had gradually drawn the land-folk into the cities, and so created the type of the Polis, repeated itself at the last in absurd form; everyone wanted to live in the middle of the city, in its densest nucleus, for otherwise he could not feel himself to be the urban man that he was. All these cities are only *cités*, inner towns. The new syncœcism formed, instead of suburban zones, *the world of the upper floors*. In the year 74 Rome, in spite of its immense population, had the ridiculously small perimeter of twelve miles. Consequently these city-bodies extended in general not in breadth, but more and more upward. The block-tenements of Rome such as the famous Insula Feliculæ, rose, with a street breadth of only ten to seventeen feet, to heights that have never been seen in Western Europe and are seen in only a few cities in America. Near the Capitol, the roofs already reached to the level of the hill-saddle.

Always the splendid mass-cities harbour lamentable poverty and degraded habits. The attics and mansards, the cellars and back courts are breeding a new type of raw man – in Baghdad and in Babylon, just as in Tenochtitlan and today in London and Berlin. Diodorus tells of a deposed Egyptian king who was reduced to living in one of these wretched upper-floor tenements of Rome.

But no wretchedness, no compulsion, not even a clear vision of the madness of this development, avails to neutralize the attractive force of these dæmonic creations.

The wheel of Destiny rolls on to its end; the birth of the City entails its death.

Long, long ago the country bore the country-town and nourished it with her best blood. Now the giant city sucks the country dry, insatiably and incessantly demanding and devouring fresh streams of men, till it wearies and dies in the midst of an almost uninhabited waste of country. Once the full sinful beauty of this last marvel of all history has captured a victim, it never lets him go.

Primitive folk can loose themselves from the soil and wander; but the intellectual nomad never. Homesickness for the great city is keener than any other nostalgia. Home is for him any one of these giant cities, but even the nearest village is alien territory. He would sooner die upon the pavement than go "back" to the land. Even disgust at this pretentiousness, weariness of the thousand-hued glitter, the *tædium vitæ* that in the end overcomes many, does not set these intellectual nomads free. They take the City with them into the mountains or on the sea. They have lost the country within themselves, and will never regain it outside.

What makes the man of the world-cities incapable of living on any but this artificial footing is that the cosmic beat in his being is ever decreasing, while the tensions of his waking-consciousness become more and more dangerous.

Tension without cosmic pulsation to animate it is the transition to nothingness. But Civilization is nothing but tension. The head, in all the outstanding men of the Civilizations, is dominated exclusively by an expression of extreme tension. Intelligence is only the capacity for un-

derstanding at high tension. And in every Culture these heads are the types of its final men – one has only to compare them with the peasant heads, when such happen to emerge in the swirl of the great city's street-life.

Peasant wisdom is mother wit, instinct, based as in other animals upon the sensed beat of life. The advance through the city-spirit to the cosmopolitan intelligence can be described as a steady diminution of the Destiny-feeling and an unrestrained augmentation of needs according to the operation of a Causality. Intelligence is the replacement of unconscious living by exercise in thought – masterly, but bloodless and jejune.

The intelligent visage is similar in all races – what is recessive in them is, precisely, race. The weaker the feeling for the necessity and self-evidence of Being, the more the habit of " elucidation " grows, the more the fear in the waking-consciousness comes to be stilled by causal methods. Hence the assimilation of knowledge with demonstrability, and the substitution of scientific theory, the causal myth, for the religious. Hence, too, money-in-the-abstract as the pure causality of economic life, in contrast to rustic barter, which is pulsation and not a system of tensions.

Tension, when it has become intellectual, knows no form of recreation but that which is specific to the world-city – namely, *détente*, relaxation, distraction. Genuine play, *joie de vivre*, pleasure, inebriation, are products of the cosmic beat, and as such are no longer comprehensible in their essence. But the relief of hard, intensive brain-work by its opposite – conscious and practised fooling; of intellectual tension by the bodily tension of sport; of bodily tension by the sensual straining after " pleasure "

and spiritual straining after the "excitements" of betting and competitions; of the pure logic of the day's work by a consciously enjoyed mysticism – all this is common to the world-cities of all the Civilizations.

Cinema, Expressionism, Theosophy, boxing contests, nigger dances, poker, and racing – one can find it all in Rome. Indeed, the connoisseur might extend his researches to the Indian, Chinese, and Arabian world-cities as well. To name but one example: if one reads the Kama-sutram one understands how it was that Buddhism *also* appealed to men's tastes, and then the bullfighting scenes in the Palace of Cnossus will be looked at with quite different eyes. A cult, no doubt, underlay them, but there was a savour over it all, as over Rome's fashionable Isis-cult in the neighbourhood of the Circus Maximus.

And then, there suddenly emerges a phenomenon that has long been preparing itself underground and now steps forward to make an end of the drama – the *sterility of civilized man.* This is not something that can be grasped as a plain matter of Causality, as modern science naturally enough has tried to grasp it. It is to be understood as an essentially *metaphysical* turn towards death. The last man of the world-city no longer *wants* to live. He may cling to life as an individual, but as a type, as an aggregate, no. For it is a characteristic of this collective existence that it eliminates the terror of death.

That which strikes the true peasant with a deep and inexplicable fear, the notion that the family and the name may be extinguished, has now lost its meaning. The continuance of the blood-relation in the visible world is no longer a duty of the blood. The destiny of being the last of the line is no longer felt as a doom. Children do not

happen, not because children have become impossible, but principally because intelligence at the peak of intensity can no longer find any reason for their existence.

Let the reader try to merge himself in the soul of the peasant. He has sat on his glebe from primeval times, or has fastened his clutch in it, to adhere to it with his blood. He is rooted in it as the descendant of his forbears and as the forbear of future descendants. *His* house, *his* property, means, here, not the temporary connection of person and thing for a brief span of years, but an enduring and inward union of *eternal* land and *external* blood. It is only from this mystical conviction of settlement that the great epochs of the cycle – procreation, birth, and death – derive that metaphysical element of wonder which condenses in the symbolism of custom and religion that all landbound people possess.

For the " last men " all this is past and gone. Intelligence and sterility are allied in old families, old peoples, and old Cultures – not merely because in each microcosm the overstrained and fettered animal-element is eating up the plant element, but also because the waking-consciousness assumes that being is normally regulated by causality. That which the man of intelligence, most significantly and characteristically, labels as " natural impulse " or " life-force," he knows, and also values, causally, giving it the place amongst his other needs that his judgment assigns to it.

When the ordinary thought of a highly cultivated people begins to regard " having children " as a question of *pro's* and *con's*, the great turning-point has come. For Nature knows nothing of *pro* and *con*. Everywhere, wherever life is actual, reigns an inward organic logic, an

" it," a drive, that is utterly independent of waking-being, with its causal linkages, and indeed not even observed by it. The abundant proliferation of primitive peoples is a *natural phenomenon*, which is not even thought about, still less judged as to its utility or the reverse. When reasons have to be put forward at all in a question of life, life itself has become questionable. At that point begins prudent limitation of the number of births.

In the Classical world the practice was deplored by Polybius as the ruin of Greece; and yet even at his date it had long been established in the great cities. In subsequent Roman times it became appallingly general. At first explained by the economic misery of the times, very soon it ceased to explain itself at all.

And at that point, too — in Buddhist India as in Babylon, in Rome as in our own cities — a man's choice of the woman who is to be, not mother of his children as amongst peasants and primitives, but his own " companion for life," becomes a problem of mentalities. The Ibsen marriage appears, the " higher spiritual affinity " in which both parties are " free." Free, that is, as intelligences, free from the plantlike urge of the blood to continue itself. And it becomes possible for a Shaw to say that " unless Woman repudiates her womanliness, her duty to her husband, to her children, to society, to the law, and to everyone but herself, she cannot emancipate herself."

The primary woman, the peasant woman, is *mother*. The whole vocation towards which she has yearned from childhood is included in that one word. But now emerges the Ibsen woman, the comrade, the heroine of a whole megalopolitan literature from Northern drama to Parisian novel. Instead of children, she has soul-conflicts. Mar-

riage is a craft-art for the achievement of " mutual understanding."

It is all the same whether the case against children is the American lady's who would not miss a season for anything, or the Parisienne's who fears that her lover would leave her, or an Ibsen heroine's who " belongs to herself " — they all belong to themselves and they are all unfruitful. The same fact, in conjunction with the same arguments, is to be found in the Alexandrian, in the Roman, and, as a matter of course, in every other civilized society — and conspicuously in that in which Buddha grew up. In Hellenism and in the nineteenth century, as in the times of Lao-tse and the Charvaka doctrine, there is an ethic for childless intelligences, and a literature about the inner conflicts of Nora and Nana. The " quiverful," which was still an honourable enough spectacle in the days of Werther, becomes something rather provincial. The father of many children is for the great city a subject for caricature. Ibsen did not fail to note it, and presented it in his *Love's Comedy*.

At this level all Civilizations enter upon a stage, which lasts for centuries, of appalling depopulation. The whole pyramid of cultural man vanishes. It crumbles from the summit, first the world-cities, then the provincial forms, and finally the land itself, whose best blood has incontinently poured into the towns, merely to bolster them up awhile. At the last, only the primitive blood remains, alive, but robbed of its strongest and most promising elements. This residue is the *Fellah type*.

If anything has demonstrated the fact that Causality has nothing to do with history, it is the familiar " decline " of the Classical, which accomplished itself long before the

irruption of Germanic migrants. The Imperium enjoyed the completest peace; it was rich and highly developed; it was well organized; and it possessed in its emperors from Nerva to Marcus Aurelius a series of rulers such as the Cæsarism of no other Civilization can show. And yet the population dwindled, quickly and wholesale. The desperate marriage-and-children laws of Augustus, the wholesale adoptions, the incessant plantation of soldiers of barbarian origin to fill the depleted country-side, the immense food-charities of Nerva and Trajan for the children of poor parents — nothing availed to check the process.

Italy, then North Africa and Gaul, and finally Spain, which under the early Cæsars had been one of the most densely populated parts of the Empire, became empty and desolate. The famous saying of Pliny — so often and so significantly quoted today in connection with national economics — "*Latifundia perdidere Italiam, jam, vero et provincias*," inverts the order of the process. The large estates would never have got to this point if the peasantry had not already been sucked into the towns and, if not openly, at any rate inwardly, surrendered their soil.

The terrible truth came out at last in the edict of Pertinax, A.D. 193, by which anyone in Italy or the provinces was permitted to take possession of untended land, and if he brought it under cultivation, to hold it as his legal property.

The historical student has only to turn his attention seriously to other Civilizations to find the same phenomenon everywhere. Depopulation can be distinctly traced in the background of the Egyptian New Empire, especially from the XIX dynasty onwards. Street widths like those of Amenophis IV at Tell-el-Amarna — of fifty yards —

would have been unthinkable with the denser population of the old days. The onset of the "Sea-peoples," too, was only barely repulsed – their chances of obtaining possession of the realm were certainly not less promising than those of the Germans of the fourth century *vis-à-vis* the Roman world. And finally the incessant infiltration of Libyans into the Delta culminated when one of their leaders seized the power, in 945 B.C. – precisely as Odoacer seized it in A.D. 476. The same tendency can be felt in the history of political Buddhism after the Cæsar Asoka.

If the Maya population literally vanished within a very short time after the Spanish conquest, and their great empty cities were reabsorbed by the jungle, this does not prove merely the brutality of the conqueror – which in this regard would have been helpless before the self-renewing power of a young and fruitful Culture-mankind – but an extinction from within that no doubt had long been in progress.

If we turn to our own Civilization, we find that the old families of the French noblesse were not, in the great majority of cases, eradicated in the Revolution, but have died out since 1815; their sterility has spread to the bourgeoisie and, since 1870, to the peasantry which that very Revolution almost re-created. In England, and still more in the United States – particularly in the east, the very states where the stock is best and oldest – the process of "race suicide" denounced by Roosevelt set in long ago on the largest scale.

Consequently we find everywhere in these Civilizations that the provincial cities at an early stage, and the giant cities in turn at the end of the evolution, stand empty. Harboured in their stone masses is a small population of

fellaheen who shelter in them as the men of the Stone Age sheltered in caves and pile-dwellings. Samarra was abandoned by the tenth century. Pataliputra, Asoka's capital, was an immense and completely uninhabited waste of houses when the Chinese traveller Hiouen-tsang visited it about A.D. 635. Many of the great Maya cities must have been in that condition even in Cortez's time. In a long series of Classical writers from Polybius onward we read of old, renowned cities in which the streets have become lines of empty, crumbling shells, where the cattle browse in forum and gymnasium, and the amphitheatre is a sown field, dotted with emergent statues and hermæ. Rome had in the fifth century of our era the population of a village, though its Imperial palaces were still habitable.

This, then, is the conclusion of the city's history. Growing from primitive barter-centre to Culture-city and at last to world-city, it sacrifices first the blood and soul of its creators to the needs of its majestic evolution, and then the last flower of that growth to the spirit of Civilization. So, doomed, it moves on to final self-destruction.

The period of Civilization is that of the victory of city over country. It frees itself from the grip of the ground, but to its own ultimate ruin. Rootless, dead to the cosmic, irrevocably committed to stone and to intellectualism, it develops a form-language that reproduces every trait of its essence. Not the language of a becoming and growth, but that of a becomeness and completion – capable of alteration certainly, but not of evolution. Not now Destiny, but Causality, not now living Direction, but Extension, rules. Every form-language of a Culture, together with

the history of its evolution, adheres to the original spot. But civilized forms are at home anywhere and capable, therefore, of unlimited extension as soon as they appear. The Hanse Towns in their north-Russian staples built Gothically. Spaniards in South America built in the Baroque style. But that even the smallest chapter of Gothic style-*history* should *evolve* outside the limits of West Europe was impossible — as impossible as that Attic or English drama, or the art of fugue, or the Lutheran or the Orphic religion should be propagated, or even inwardly assimilated, by men of alien Cultures.

But the essence of Alexandrinism and of our Romanticism is something which belongs to all urban men without distinction. Romanticism marks the beginning of that which Goethe, with his wide vision, called world-literature — the literature of the leading world-*city*. Against this a provincial literature, native to the soil but negligible, struggles everyhere with difficulty to maintain itself. The state of Venice, or that of Frederick the Great, or the English Parliament (as an effective reality), cannot be reproduced. But "modern constitutions" can be "introduced" into any African or Asiatic state, as Classical Polis could be set up amongst Numidians and ancient Britons. In Egypt the writing that came into common use was not the hieroglyphic, but the letter-script, which was without doubt a technical discovery of the Civilization Age. And so in general. It is not true Culture-languages like the Greek of Sophocles, or the German of Luther, which are capable of being acquired by anybody and everybody — but world-languages like the Greek of Koine and Arabic and Babylonian and English, the outcome of daily practical usage in a world-city.

Consequently, in all Civilizations the "modern" cities assume a more and more uniform type. Go where we may, there are Berlin, London, and New York for us – just as the Roman traveller would find his columnar architecture, his fora with their statuary, and his temples in Palmyra or Trier or Timgad or the Hellenistic cities that extended out to the Indus and the Aral.

But that which was thus disseminated was no longer a style, but a taste; not genuine custom but mannerism; not national costume but the fashion. This, of course, makes it possible for remote peoples not only to accept the "permanent" gains of a Civilization, but even to re-radiate them in an independent form. Such regions of "moonlight" civilization are south China and especially Japan (which were first Sinicized at the close of the Han period, about A.D. 220); Java as a relay of the Brahman Civilization; and Carthage, which obtained its forms from Babylon.

All these are forms of a waking-consciousness now acute to excess, mitigated or limited by no cosmic force, purely intellectual and extensive. But on that very account they are capable of so powerful an output that their last flickering rays reach out and superpose effects over almost the whole earth. Fragments of the forms of Chinese Civilization are probably to be found in Scandinavian wood-architecture; Babylonian measures probably in the South Seas; Classical coins in South Africa; Egyptian and Indian influences probably in the land of the Incas.

But while this process of extension was overpassing all frontiers, the development of inner form of the Civilization was fulfilling itself with impressive consistency. Three stages are clearly to be distinguished – the release

from the Culture, the production of the thoroughbred Civilization-form, and the final hardening.

For us this development has now set in. As I see it, it is Germany that is destined, as the last nation of the West, to crown the mighty edifice. In this stage all questions of the life – the Apollinian, Magian, or Faustian life – have been thought upon to the limit, and brought to a final clear condition of knowledge and not-knowledge. For or about ideas men fight no more. The last idea – that of the Civilization itself – is formulated in outline; and technics and economics are, as *problems*, enunciated and prepared for handling.

But this is only the beginning of a vast task; the postulates have to be unfolded and these forms applied to the whole existence of the earth. Only when this has been accomplished and the Civilization has become definitely established not only in shape, but in mass, does the hardening of the form set in. Style, in the Cultures, has been the *rhythm of the process of self-implementing*. But the Civilized style (if we may use the word at all) arises as the *expression of the state of completeness*.

It attains – as in Egypt and China especially – to a splendid perfection. It imparts this perfection to all the utterances of a life that is now inwardly unalterable, to its ceremonial and mien as to the superfine and studied forms of its art-practice.

Of history, in the sense of an urge towards a form-ideal, there can now be no question. But there is an unfailing and easy superficial adaptiveness which again and again manages to coax fresh little art-problems and solutions out of the now basically stable language. Of this kind is the whole "history" of Chinese-Japanese painting (as we

know it) and of Indian architecture. The history of these Civilizations is merely apparent, like their great cities, which constantly change in face, but never become other than what they are.

In these cities there is no Soul. They are land in petrified form.

CHAPTER 2

THE LIFE OF ESTATES AND CLASSES

> "*All world-improvers and world-citizens stand for fellaheen ideals, whether they know it or not. Their success means the historical abdication of the nation in favour, not of everlasting peace, but of another nation.*"

"The nation," like every other grand symbol of the Culture, is intimately the cherished possession of a few – those who have it are born to it as men are born to art or philosophy. And the distinctions of creator, critic, and layman, or something like them, hold for it also – alike in a classical Polis, a Jewish consensus, and a Western people.

When a nation rises up ardent to fight for its freedom and honour, it is always a minority that really fires the multitude. The people "awakens" – it is more than a figure of speech, for only thus and then does the waking-consciousness of the whole become manifested. All these individuals whose "we"-feeling yesterday went content with a horizon of family and job, and perhaps home-town,

are suddenly today men of nothing less than the People. Their thought and feeling, their Ego, and therewith the "it" in them, have been transformed to the very depths, become *historic*. And then even the unhistorical peasant becomes a member of the nation, and a day dawns for him in which he experiences history and not merely lets it pass him by.

But in the world-cities, besides a minority which has history and livingly experiences, feels, and seeks to lead the nation, there arises another minority of timeless a-historic, literary men – men not of destiny, but of reasons and causes; men who are inwardly detached from the pulse of blood and being; wide-awake thinking consciousnesses, that can no longer find any "reasonable" connotation for the nation-idea.

Cosmopolitanism is a mere waking-conscious association of intelligentsias. In it there is hatred of Destiny, and above all of history as the expression of Destiny. Everything national belongs to race – so much so that it is incapable of finding language for itself, clumsy in all that demands thought, and shiftless to the point of fatalism. *Cosmopolitanism is literature* and remains literature – very strong in reasons; very weak in defending them otherwise than with more reasons, in defending them with the blood.

All the more, then, this minority of far superior intellect chooses the intellectual weapon. All the more is it able to do so as the world cities are pure intellect, rootless, and by very hypothesis the common property of the civilization.

The born world-citizens, world-pacifists, and world-reconcilers – alike in the China of the "Contending States," in Buddhist India, in the Hellenistic age, and in the

Western world today – are the *spiritual leaders of fellaheen. "Panis et circenses" is only another formula for pacifism.*

In the history of all Cultures there is an anti-national element, whether we have evidences of it or not. Pure self-directed thinking was ever alien to life – and therefore alien to history – unwarlike, raceless. Consider our Humanism and Classicism, the Sophists of Athens, Buddha and Lao-tse – not to mention the passionate contempt of all nationalisms displayed by the great champions of the ecclesiastical and the philosophical world-view. However the cases differ amongst themselves otherwise, they are alike in this: the world-feeling of race; the political and therefore national instinct for fact (" my country, right or wrong! "); the resolve to be the subject and not the object of evolution (for one or the other it has to be); in a word, the *will*-to-power – has to retreat. It makes room for a tendency of which the standard-bearers are most often men without original impulse, but all the more set upon their logic; men at home in a world of truths, ideals, and Utopias; bookmen who believe that they can replace the actual by the logical, the might of facts by an abstract justice, Destiny by Reason.

It begins with the everlastingly fearful who withdraw themselves out of actuality into cells and study-chambers and spiritual communities, and proclaim the nullity of the world's doings. And it ends in every Culture with the apostles of world-peace. Every people has such (historically speaking) waste-products. Even their heads constitute physiognomically a group by themselves. In the " history of intellect " they stand high – and many illustrious names are numbered amongst them. But regarded from

the point of view of actual history, they are inefficients.

The Destiny of a nation plunged in the events of its world depends upon how far its race-quality is successful in making these events historically ineffective against it. It could perhaps be demonstrated, even now, that in the Chinese world of states the realm of Tsin won through (250 B.C.) because it alone had kept itself free from Taoist sentiments. Be this as it may, the Roman people prevailed over the rest of the Classical world because it was able to insulate its conduct of policy from the fellah-instincts of Hellenism.

A nation is humanity brought into living form. The practical result of world-improving theories is consistently a *formless and therefore historyless mass.*

All world-improvers and world-citizens stand for fellaheen ideals, whether they know it or not. *Their success means the historical abdication of the nation in favour, not of everlasting peace, but of another nation.*

World-peace is always a one-sided resolve. The *Pax Romana* had for the later soldier-emperors and Germanic band-kings only one practical significance: it made a formless population of a hundred millions a mere object for the will-to-power of small warrior-groups. This peace cost the peaceful sacrifices beside which the losses of Cannæ seem vanishingly small.

The Babylonian, Chinese, Indian, Egyptian worlds pass from one conqueror's hands to another's, and it is their own blood that pays for the contest. That is their – peace.

When in 1401 the Mongols conquered Mesopotamia, they built a victory memorial out of the skulls of a hundred thousand inhabitants of Baghdad, which had not defended itself.

From the intellectual point of view, no doubt, the extinction of the nations puts a fellaheen-world above history, civilized at last and for ever. But in the realm of facts it reverts to a state of nature, in which it alternates between long submissiveness and brief angers that for all the bloodshed – which world-peace never diminishes – alter nothing.

Of old they shed their blood for themselves; now they must shed it for others, often enough for the mere entertainment of others; that is the difference. A resolute leader who collects ten thousand adventurers about him can do as he pleases. Were the whole world a single Imperium, it would thereby become merely the maximum conceivable field for the exploits of such conquering heroes.

"*Lever doodt als Sklav* – better dead than slave – " is an old Frisian peasant-saying. The reverse has been the choice of every Late Civilization. And every Late Civilization has had to experience how much that choice costs it.

There are streams of being which are " in form " in the same sense in which the term is used in sports. A field of steeplechasers is " in form " when the legs swing surely over the fences, and the hoofs beat firmly and rhythmically on the flat. When wrestlers, fencers, ball-players are " in form," the riskiest acts and moves come off easily and naturally. An art-period is in form when its tradition is second nature, as counterpoint was to Bach. An army is in form when it is like the army of Napoleon at Austerlitz and the army of Moltke at Sedan. Practically every-

thing that has been achieved in world-history, in war, and in that continuation of war by intellectual means that we call politics; in all successful diplomacy, tactics, strategy; in the competition of states or social classes or parties — has been the product of living unities that found themselves "in form."

The word for race- or breed-education is "training," as against the "shaping" which creates communities of waking-consciousness on a basis of uniform teachings or beliefs. Books, for example, are shaping agents; while the constant felt pulse and harmony of *milieu* into which one feels oneself, *lives* oneself — like a novice or a page of early Gothic times — are training influences. The "good form" and ceremonies of a given society are sense-presentations of the beat of a given species of Being, and to master them one must *have* the beat of them.

The profounder the form, the stricter and more repellent it is. To the outsider, therefore, it appears to be a slavery; the member, on the contrary, has a perfect and easy command of it. The Prince de Ligne was, no less than Mozart, master of the form and not its slave; and the same holds good of *every* born aristocrat, statesman, and captain.

In all high Cultures, therefore, there is a *peasantry* — which is breed, stock, in the broad sense, and thus to a certain extent nature herself — and a *society* which is assertively and emphatically "in form." It is a set of classes or Estates, and no doubt artificial and transitory. But the history of these classes and estates is *world-history at highest potential.* It is only in relation to it that the peasant is seen as historyless.

The whole broad and grand history of these six millennia has accomplished itself in the life-courses of the high

Cultures, *because* these Cultures themselves placed their creative foci in Estates possessing breed and training, and so in the course of fulfilment became trained and bred. A Culture is Soul that has arrived at self-expression in sensible forms, but these forms are living and evolving. Their matrix is in the intensified Being of individuals or groups – that is, in that which I have just called Being " in form." And when, and not until, this Being is sufficiently formed to that high rightness, it becomes representative of a representable Culture.

This Culture is not only a grand thing, but wholly unlike any other thing in the organic world. It is the one point at which man lifts himself above the powers of Nature and becomes himself a Creator. Even as to race, breed, he is Nature's creature – he *is* bred. But, as Estate, he breeds himself just as he breeds the noble kinds of animal-plant with which he surrounds himself – and that process, too, is in the deepest and most final sense " Culture."

Culture and class are interchangeable expressions; they arise together and they vanish together. The breeding of select types of wines or fruit or flowers, the breeding of blood horses, *is* Culture. And the culture, in exactly the same sense, of the human élite arises as the expression of a Being that has brought itself into high " form."

For that very reason, there is found in every Culture a sharp sense of whether this or that man belongs thereto or not. The Classical notion of the Barbarian, the Arabian of the Unbeliever (Amhaarez, Giaour), the Indian of the Sudra – however differently the lines of cleavage were arrived at – are alike in this: the words do not primarily express contempt or hatred, but establish that there are dif-

ferences in pulse of Being which set an impassable barrier against all contacts on the deeper levels.

But, in sum, " caste " is a word that has been at least as much abused as it has been used. There were no castes in the Old and Middle Kingdoms of Egypt; nor in India before Buddha; nor in China before Han times. It is only in very Late conditions that they appear, and then we find them in all Cultures.

From the XXIst Dynasty onwards (*c.* 1100 B.C.) Egypt was in the hands, now of the Theban priest-caste, now of the Libyan warrior-caste; and thereafter the hardening process went on steadily till the time of Herodotus – whose view of the conditions of his day as characteristically Egyptian is just as inaccurate as our view of those prevailing in India.

The distinction between Estate and Caste is that between earliest Culture and latest Civilization. In the rise of the prime Estates – noble and priest – the Culture is unfolding itself; while the castes are the expression of its definitive fellah-state. The Estate is the most living of all, Culture launched on the path of fulfilment, " the form that living must itself unfold." The caste is absolute finishedness, the phase in which development has been succeeded by immutable fixation.

The great Estates are something quite different from *occupation-groups* like those of artisans, officials, artists, which are professionally held together by technical tradition and the spirit of their work. They are, in fact, *emblems in flesh and blood*, whose entire being, as phenomenon, as attitude, and as mode of thought, possesses symbolic meaning.

Within every Culture, while peasantry is a piece of pure

nature and growth and, therefore, a completely *impersonal* manifestation – nobility and priesthood are the results of high breeding and forming. They therefore express a *thoroughly personal Culture*, which, by the height of its form, rejects not merely barbarians, but presently also all who are not of their status, as a *residue* – regarded by the nobility as the "people" and by clergy as the "laity."

This *style of personality* is the material that, when the fellah-age arrives, petrifies into the type of a caste, which thereafter endures unaltered for centuries. In the living Culture, race and estate are in antithesis as the impersonal and the personal; in fellah-times *the mass and the caste*, the coolie and the Brahmin, *are in antithesis as the formless and the formal*. The living form has become formula, still possessing style, but possessing it as stylistic rigidity. This petrified style of the caste is of an extreme subtlety, dignity, and intellectuality, and feels itself infinitely superior to the developing mankind of a Culture. We can hardly form an idea of the lofty height from which the Mandarin or the Brahmin looks down upon European thoughts and actions, or how fundamentally the Egyptian priest must have despised a visiting Pythagoras or Plato. It moves impassive through time with the Byzantine dignity of a soul that has left all its problems and enigmas far behind it.

Nobility is cosmic and plantlike (hence its profound connection with the land). It is itself a plant, strongly rooted in the soil, established on the soil – in this, as in so many other respects, a supreme peasantry. It is from this kind of cosmic boundness that the idea of *property* arises,

which to the microcosm as such, freely moving in space, is wholly alien.

Property is a primary feeling and not a concept; it belongs to Time and History and Destiny, and not to Space and Causality. It cannot be logically based, but it is there.

Property in the most significant sense – the having grown up with something – refers less to the particular person than to the family tree to which he belongs. In every quarrel within a peasant or even within a princely family, this is the deep and violent element. The master for the time being holds possession only in the name of the family line. Hence, too, the terror of death without heirs. *Property also is a Time-symbol.* Consequently it is closely related to marriage, which is a firm plantlike intergrowth and mutual possession of two human beings, so real as to be even reflected in an increasing facial similarity.

"Having" begins with the plant, and propagates itself in the history of higher mankinds just to the precise extent that history contains plant-character and race. Hence property in the most genuine sense is always ground-property, and the impulse to convert other acquisitions into ground and soil is an evidence of sound stock. The plant *possesses* the ground in which it roots. It is its property, which it defends to the utmost, with the desperate force of its whole being, against alien seeds, against overshadowing neighbour plants, against all nature. So, too, a bird defends the nest in which it is hatching.

The bitterest fights over property occur – not in the Late periods of great Cultures, between rich and poor, and about movable goods – but here in the beginnings of the plant-world. When, in a wood, one feels all about one the

silent, merciless battle for the soil that goes on day and night, one is appalled by the depth of an impulse that is almost identical with life itself. Here is a yearlong, tenacious, embittered wrestle, a hopeless resistance of the weak against the strong, that goes on to the point that the victor too is broken. It is only paralleled in the most primitive of mankind when an old peasant-family is expelled from the clod, *from the nest*, or a family of noble stock is uprooted or, more truly, cut off from its roots, by money.

The far more conspicuous conflicts in the later cities have quite another meaning. For here – in communism of all kinds – it is not the experience of possessing, but the idea of property purely as material means that is fought for. The negation of property is never race-impulse, but the doctrinaire protest of the purely intellectual, urban, uprooted, anti-vegetal waking-consciousness of saints, philosophers, and idealists.

The same reason actuates the monk of the hermitage and the scientific Socialist – be his name Moh-ti, Zeno, or Marx – to reject the plantlike; the same feeling impels men of race to defend it. Here, as ever, fact and truth are opposed. " Property is theft " is the ultra-materialistic form of the old thought: " What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul? " When the priest gives up property, he is giving up something dangerous and alien; when a noble does so, he is giving up himself.

This brings us to a duality of the property-idea feeling – *Having as power* and *Having as spoil.* Both, in primitive men of race, lie immediately together. Every Bedouin or Viking intends both. The sea-hero is always a sea-robber also; every war is concerned with possessions and,

above all, possessions in land. But a step, and the knight becomes the robber-knight, the adventurer becomes conqueror and king, like Rurik the Norman in Russia, and many an Achæan and Etruscan pirate in Homeric times. In all heroic poetry we find – side by side with the strong and natural satisfaction of winning battles and power and women, and the unbridled outbursts of joy and grief, anger, and love – the immense delight of "having."

As the Culture rises to its height, these two primary urges trend widely apart, and hostility develops between them. *The history of this hostility is almost the same thing as world-history. From the feeling of power come conquest and politics and law; from that of spoil, trade and economy and money.* Law is the property of the powerful. Their law is the law of all. Money is the strongest weapon of the acquiring: with it he subdues the world. Economics likes and intends a state that is weak and subservient to it. Politics demands that economic life shall adapt itself to and within the State – Adam Smith and Friedrich List, Capitalism and Socialism. All Cultures exhibit at the outset a war- and a trade-nobility; then a land- and a money-nobility; and finally a military and an economic war-management, and a ceaseless struggle of money against law.

In sum, we see that the Estates have a natural build which in its evolution and action forms the basic structure of every Culture's life-course. No specific decision made it. Revolutions only alter it when they are forms of the evolution and not results of some private will. It never, in its full cosmic significance, enters the consciousness of men as doers and thinkers, because it lies too deep in human being to be other than a self-evident datum. It is

merely from the surface that men take the catchwords and causes, over which they fight on that side of history which theory regards as horizontally layered, but which in actuality is an aggregate of inseparable interpenetrations.

As city-*life* emerges – through the inhabitants of these small settlements acquiring a common soul, and becoming conscious that the life within is something different from the life outside – the spell of *personal freedom* begins to operate, and to attract within the walls life-streams of more and more new kinds. The freedom-idea ever contains a negative; it looses, redeems, defends, always frees a man *from* something. Of *this* freedom the city is the expression. The city-spirit is understanding become free, and everything in the way of intellectual, social, and national movements that bursts forth in Late periods under the name of Freedom leads back to an origin *in this one prime fact of detachment from the land.*

Economy is freed to make money, science freed to criticize. And so in all the great decisions we perceive the intellect with its books and its meetings having the word ("Democracy"), and money obtaining the advantages ("Plutocracy") – and it is never ideas, but always capital, that wins. But this again is just the opposition of truths and facts, in the form in which it develops from the city-life.

Moreover, by way of protest against the ancient symbols of the soil-bound life, the city opposes to the aristocracy of birth the notion of an aristocracy of money and an aristocracy of intellect – the one not very explicit as a

claim, but all the more effective as a fact; the other a truth, but nothing more than that and, as a spectacle for the eye, not very convincing.

With the close of the Late period of every Culture the history of its estates also comes to a more or less violent end. The mere desire to live in rootless freedom prevails over the great imperative Culture-symbols, which a mankind now wholly dominated by the city no longer comprehends or tolerates. Finance sheds every trace of feeling for earth-bound immovable values, and scientific criticism every residue of piety. Another such victory also, in a measure, is the liberation of the peasant, which consists in relieving him from the pressure of servage, but hands him over to the power of money, which now proceeds to turn the land into movable property.

This happened in our case in the eighteenth century; in Byzantium about 740 under the Nomos Georgikos of the legislator Leo III (after which the colonate slowly disappeared); in Rome along with the founding of the Plebeian order in 471. In Sparta the simultaneous attempt of Pausanias to emancipate the Helots failed.

This Plebs is the Third Estate,[1] *in the form in which it is constitutionally recognized as a unit.* The Plebs, as residue, is only susceptible of negative definition – as meaning everyone who does not belong to the land-nobility or is not the incumbent of a great priestly office. Only the protest holds it together. In it are traders, craftsmen, day-labourers, clerks. Outside politics – that is, socially – the plebs, as a unit distinguished from nobility and priesthood, has no existence, but falls apart at once into special callings that are perfectly distinct in interests. It is a *Party*, and

[1] See footnote, page 44.

what it stands for as such is freedom in the urban sense of the word.

The nobility of every Springtime had been *the* Estate in the most primary sense, history become flesh, race at highest potential. The priesthood was its *counter*-estate, saying no wherever nobility said yes and thus displaying the other side of life in a grand symbol.

The Third Estate, without proper inward unity, was the non-estate — the protest, in estate-form, against the existence of estates; not against this or that estate, but against the symbolic view of life in general. It rejects all differences not justified by reason or practically useful. And yet it does mean something itself, and means it very distinctly — *the city-life as estate* in contradistinction to that of the country, *freedom as a condition* in contrast to attachment. But, looked at from within its own field, it is by no means the unclassified residue that it appears in the eyes of the primary estates. The bourgeoisie has definite limits; it belongs to the Culture; it embraces, in the best sense, all who adhere to it, and under the name of people, *populus*, *demos*, rallies nobility and priesthood, money and mind, craftsman and wage-earner, as constituents of itself.

This is the idea that Civilization finds prevailing when it comes on the scene. And this is what it destroys by its notion of the Fourth Estate, *the Mass*, which rejects the Culture and its matured forms, lock, stock, and barrel. It is the absolute of formlessness, persecuting with its hate every sort of form, every distinction of rank, the orderliness of property, the orderliness of knowledge. It is the new nomadism of the Cosmopolis. Slaves and barbarians in the Classical world, Sudras in the Indian, and in general anything and everything that is merely human, provide for it

an undifferentiated floating-something that falls apart the moment it is born. It recognizes no past and possesses no future.

Thus the Fourth Estate becomes the expression of the passing of a history over into the historyless. The mass is the end, the radical nullity.

Materialism would not be complete without the need of now and again easing the intellectual tension, by giving way to moods of myth, by performing rites of some sort, or by enjoying with an inward light-heartedness the charms of the irrational, the unnatural, the repulsive, and even, if need be, the merely silly.

This tendency, visible in the times of Meng-tse (372–289) and in those of the first Buddhist brotherhoods, is present also (and with the same significance) in Hellenism, of which indeed it is a leading characteristic. About 312 poetical scholars of the Callimachus type in Alexandria invented the Serapis-cult and provided it with an elaborate legend. The Isis-cult in Republican Rome was something very different both from the emperor-worship that succeeded it, and from the deeply earnest Isis-religion of Egypt. It was a religious pastime of high society, which at times provoked public ridicule and at times led to public scandal and the closing of the cult-centres. The Chaldean astrology was in those days a *fashion*, very far removed from the genuine Classical belief in oracles and from the Magian faith in the might of the hour. It was " relaxation," a " let's pretend." And, over and above this, there were the numberless charlatans and fake prophets who toured the towns and sought with their pretentious rites to per-

suade the half-educated into a renewed interest in religion.

Correspondingly, we have in the European-American world of today the occultist and theosophist fraud; the American Christian Science; the untrue Buddhism of drawing-rooms; the religious arts-and-crafts business (brisker in Germany than even in England) that caters for groups and cults of Gothic or Late Classical or Taoist sentiment. Everywhere it is just a toying with myths that no one really believes, a tasting of cults that it is hoped might fill the inner void. The real belief is always the belief in atoms and numbers, but it requires this highbrow hocus-pocus to make it bearable in the long run. Materialism is shallow and honest, mock-religion shallow and dishonest. But the fact that the latter is possible at all foreshadows a new and genuine spirit of seeking that declares itself, first quietly, but soon emphatically and openly, in the civilized waking-consciousness.

This phase I call the *Second Religiousness*. It appears in all Civilizations as soon as they have fully formed themselves as such and are beginning to pass, slowly and imperceptibly, into the non-historical state in which time-periods cease to mean anything. (So far as the Western Civilization is concerned, therefore, we are still many generations short of that point.) The Second Religiousness is the necessary counterpart of Cæsarism, which is the final *political* constitution of Late Civilizations. It becomes visible, therefore, in the Augustan Age of the Classical and about the time of Shih-huang-ti's time in China.

In both phenomena the creative young strength of the Early Culture is lacking. But both have their greatness nevertheless. That of the Second Religiousness consists in a deep piety that fills the waking-consciousness — the piety

that impressed Herodotus in the Late Egyptians, and impresses West-Europeans in China, India, and Islam. And that of Cæsarism consists in its unchained might of colossal facts.

But neither in the creations of this piety, nor in the form of the Roman Imperium, is there anything primary and spontaneous. Nothing is built up, no idea unfolds itself. It is only as if a mist cleared off the land and revealed the old forms, uncertainly at first, but presently with increasing distinctness. The material of the Second Religiousness is simply that of the first, genuine, young religiousness — only otherwise experienced and expressed. It starts with Rationalism's fading out in helplessness; then the forms of the Springtime become visible; and finally the whole world of the primitive religion, which had receded before the grand forms of the early faith, returns to the foreground, powerful, in the guise of the popular syncretism that is to be found in every Culture at this phase.

Every " Age of Enlightenment " proceeds from an unlimited optimism of the reason — always associated with the type of the megalopolitan — to an equally unqualified scepticism. The sovereign waking-consciousness, cut off by walls and artificialities from living nature and the land about it and under it, cognizes nothing outside itself. It applies criticism to its imaginary world, which it has cleared of everyday sense-experience, and continues to do so till it has found the last and subtlest result, the form of the form — itself: namely, nothing.

With this the possibilities of physics as a critical mode of world-understanding are exhausted, and the hunger for metaphysics presents itself afresh.

But it is not the religious pastimes of educated and liter-

ature-soaked cliques, still less is it the intellect, that gives rise to the Second Religiousness. Its source is the naïve belief that arises, unremarked but spontaneous, among the masses that there is some sort of mystic constitution of actuality. Formal proofs are presently regarded as barren and tiresome word-jugglery. An equally naïve heart-need reverently responds to the myth with a cult.

CHAPTER 3

THE LIFE OF THE NATION

> "*But this century will be one of* actually *Contending States.* These *armies are not substitutes for war — they are* for *war, and they want war. Within two generations it will be they whose will prevails over that of all the comfortables put together.*"

A PEOPLE *is only really such in relation to other peoples.* And the substance of this actuality comes out in natural and ineradicable oppositions, in attack and defence, hostility and war.

Law is the *willed* form of Being. A law that has been laid down by a community expresses a *duty* for every member. But it is no proof of every member's *power.* On the contrary, it is a question of Destiny, who makes the law and for whom it is made.

There are subjects and there are objects in the *making* of laws, although everyone is an object as to the validity thereof — and this holds good without distinction for the inner law of families, guilds, estates, and states.

But for the State, which is the highest law-subject ex-

isting in historical actuality, there is, besides, an external law that it imposes upon aliens by hostilities. Ordinary civil law is a case of the first kind, a peace treaty of the second. But in all cases the law of the stronger is the law of the weaker also. To " have the right " is an expression of power.

This is a historical fact that every moment confirms, but it is not acknowledged in the realm of truth, which is not of this world. In their conceptions of right, therefore, as in other things, being and waking-being, Destiny and Causality, stand implacably opposed.

To the priestly and idealistic moral of good and evil belongs the *moral distinction of right and wrong*. But in the race-moral of good and bad the distinction is between those who give and those who receive the law. An abstract idea of justice pervades the minds and writings of all whose spirit is noble and strong, and whose blood is weak. It pervades all religions and all philosophies. But the fact-world of history knows only the *success* which turns the law of the stronger into the law of all. Over ideals it marches without pity. And if ever a man or a people renounces its power of the moment in order to remain righteous — then, certainly, his or its theoretical fame is assured in the second world of thought and truth; but assured also is the coming of a moment in which it will succumb to another life-power that has better understood realities.

So long as a historical power is so superior to its constituent units — as the State or the estate so often is to families and calling-classes, or the head of the family to its children — a just law *between* the weaker is possible as a gift from the all-powerful hand of the disinterested. But Estates seldom, and states almost never, feel a power of

this magnitude over themselves. And consequently between them the law of the stronger acts with immediate force – as is seen in a victor's treaty, unilateral in terms and still more so in interpretation and observance.

That is the difference between the *internal* and the *external* rights of historical life-units. In the first, the will of an arbiter to be impartial and just can be effective – although we are apt to deceive ourselves badly as to the degree of effective impartiality even in the best codes of history. Internal laws are the result of strict logical-causal thought centring upon truths. But for that very reason their validity is ever dependent upon the material power of their author, be this Estate or State. A revolution that annihilates this power annihilates also these laws – they remain true, but they are no longer actual.

External laws on the other hand, such as all peace treaties, are essentially never true and always actual – indeed appallingly so. They set up no pretension whatever of being just – it is quite enough that they are valid. Out of them speaks *Life*, which possesses no causal and moral logic, but is organically all the more consistent and consequent for the lack of it. Its will is to possess validity *itself;* it feels with an inward certainty what is required to that end and, seeing that, knows what is law for itself and *has to be made* law for others.

This logic is seen in every family, and particularly in old true-born peasant families as soon as authority is shattered and someone other than the head tries to determine "what is." It appears in every state, as soon as one party therein dominates the position. Every feudal age is filled with the contests between lords and vassals over the "right to rights."

With the beginning of the Late period there is a decisive turn, where city and country are in equilibrium and the powers proper to the city, money and brains, have become so strong that they feel themselves, as non-estate, an equal match for the old Estates. It is the moment when the State-idea finally rises superior to the Estates and begins to set up *in their place* the concept of the Nation.

The State has fought and won to its rights along a line of advance from feudal union to the aristocratic State. In the latter the Estates exist only with reference to the State, instead of vice versa. On the other hand, the disposition of things is such that the Government only meets the governed nation when and in so far as the nation is class-ordered. Everyone belongs to the nation, but only an élite to the classes, and these alone count politically.

The nearer the State approaches its pure form, and the more it becomes *absolute* – that is, independent of any other form-ideal – the more heavily the concept of the nation tells against that of class. There comes a moment when the nation is governed *as such*, and distinctions of "standing" become purely social. Against this evolution – which is one of the necessities of the Culture, inevitable, irrevocable – the old noble and priestly classes make one more effort of resistance. For them, now, *everything* is at stake – the heroic and the saintly, the old law, rank, blood – and, from their point of view, against what?

In the West this struggle of the old Estates against the State-power took the form of the *Fronde*.

In the Classical world, where there was no dynasty to represent the future and the aristocracy alone had political existence, we find that a dynastic or quasi-dynastic embodiment of the State-idea actually *formed itself*, and, sup-

ported by the non-privileged part of the nation, raised this latter for the first time to power. That was the mission of the *Tyrannis*.

In this change from the class-State to the absolute State, which allowed no measures of validity but its own, the dynasties of the West – and those of Egypt and of China likewise – called the non-estate to their aid, *thereby recognizing it as a political quantity*.

In Egypt, too, the period between Fronde and Revolution is hall-marked. It is the Middle Kingdom. In 1640 the decisive conflict between Crown and estates broke out simultaneously in Spain, France, and England. In almost every Spanish province the Cortes rose against Olivarez; Portugal, and with it India and Africa, fell away for ever, and it took years to regain even Catalonia and Naples. In England – just as in the Thirty Years' War – the constitutional conflict between the Crown and the gentry who dominated the Commons was carefully separated from the religious side of the Revolution, deep as was the interpenetration of the two. But the growing resistance that Cromwell encountered in the lower class in particular – which drove him, all unwillingly, into military dictatorship – and the later popularity of the restored monarchy, show the extent to which, over and above all religious differences, aristocratic interest had been concerned in bringing about the fall of the dynasty.

In Germany the Peace of Westphalia placed the Fronde of the greater princes in an English relation towards the Emperor, and in the French relation towards the lesser Fronde of the local princes. In the Empire as such, the Estates ruled; in its provinces, the Dynasty. Thenceforth the Imperial dignity, like the English kingship, was a name,

surrounded by relics of Spanish stateliness dating from the early Baroque. The individual princes, like the leading families of the English aristocracy, succumbed to the model of Paris; and their duodecimo absolutism was, politically and socially, bound in the Versailles style. So, in this field and in that, the decision fell in favour of the Bourbons and against the Habsburgs, a decision already visible to all men in the Peace of the Pyrenees of 1659.

With this epochal turn the State was actualized and attained to such a height of " condition " as could neither be surpassed nor for long maintained. Already there is a quiet breath of autumn in the air when Frederick the Great is entertaining at Sans Souci. These are the years too, in which the great special arts attain to their last, most refined, and most intellectual maturity. Side by side with the fine orators of the Athenian Agora there are Zeuxis and Praxiteles. Side by side with the filigree of Cabinet-diplomacy is the music of Bach and Mozart.

This cabinet-politics has itself become a high art, an artistic satisfaction, to all who have a finger in it — marvellous in its subtlety and elegance, courtly, refined, working mysteriously at great distances. Already Russia, the North American colonies, even the Indian states are put into play — in order, by the mere weight of surprising combinations, to bring about decisions at quite other points on the globe. It is a game with strict rules; a game of intercepted letters and secret confidants, of alliances and congresses within a system of governments which even then was called (with deep meaning) the " concert " of the powers. It is full of *noblesse* and *esprit*, to use the phrases of the period, a mode of keeping history " in form " never and nowhere else imagined, or even imaginable.

In the Western world, whose sphere of influence is already almost the sphere itself, the period of the absolutist State covers scarcely a century and a half – from 1660, when Bourbon triumphed over Habsburg in the Peace of the Pyrenees, and the Stuarts returned to England – to the Coalition Wars directed against the French Revolution, in which London triumphed over Paris. (Or, if one prefers it so, over that Congress of Vienna, in which the old diplomacy, that of blood and not money, gave the world its grand farewell performance.)

Corresponding periods are the Age of Pericles between the First and the Second Tyrannis; and the Tshun-tsiu, "Spring and Autumn," as the Chinese call the time, between the Protectors and the "Contending States."

The basic form of the Continental States at the beginning of the Civilization is "Constitutional Monarchy," the extremest possibility of which appears as what we call nowadays a Republic.

It is necessary to get clear, once and for all, of the mumblings of the doctrinaires who think in timeless and therefore unreal concepts, and for whom "Republic" is a form-in-itself. The republican ideal of the nineteenth century has no more resemblance to the Classical *res publica*, or even to Venice or the original Swiss cantons, than the English constitution to a "constitution" in the Continental sense.

That which *we* call republic is a *negation*, which of inward necessity postulates that the thing denied is an ever-present possibility. It is non-monarchy in forms borrowed from the monarchy. The genealogical feeling is im-

mensely strong in Western mankind; it strains its conscience so far as to pretend that Dynasty determines its political conduct even when Dynasty no longer exists at all. The historical is embodied therein, and unhistorically we cannot live. It makes a great difference whether, as in the case of the Classical world, the dynastic principle conveys absolutely nothing to the inner feelings of a man, or, as in the case of the West, it is real enough to need six generations of educated people to fight it down in themselves. Feeling is the secret enemy of all constitutions that are plans and not growths; they are in last analysis nothing but defensive measures born of fear and mistrust. The urban conception of freedom – freedom *from* something – narrows itself to a merely anti-dynastic significance, and republican enthusiasm lives only on this feeling.

Such a negation inevitably involves a preponderance of theory. While Dynasty and its close congener Diplomacy conserve the old tradition and pulse, Constitutions contain an overweight of systems, bookishness, and framed concepts – such as is entirely unthinkable in England, where nothing negative and defensive adheres to the form of government.

It is not for nothing that the Faustian is *par excellence* the reading and writing Culture. The printed book is an emblem of temporal, the Press of spatial, infinity. In contrast with the immense power and tyranny of these symbols, even the Chinese Civilization seems almost empty of writing. In Constitutions, literature is put into the field against knowledge of men and things; language against race; abstract right against successful tradition – regardless of whether a nation involved in the tide of events is still capable of work and " maintaining its form."

Not only the three doctrinaire constitutions of the age — the French of 1791, the German of 1848 and 1919 — but practically all such attempts, shut their eyes to the great Destiny in the fact-world, and imagine that this is the same as defeating it. In lieu of unforeseen happenings, the incidents of strong personality and imperious circumstances, it is Causality that is to rule — timeless, just, unvarying, rational cohesion of cause and effect. It is symptomatic that no written constitution knows of money as a political force. It is pure theory that they contain, one and all.

This rift in the essence of constitutional monarchy is irremediable. Here actual and conceptual, work and critique, are frontally opposed. It is their mutual attrition that constitutes what the average educated man calls internal politics.

Apart from the cases of Prussia-Germany and Austria — where constitutions did come into existence at first, but in the presence of the older political traditions were never very influential — it was only in England that the practice of government kept itself homogeneous. Here, race held its own against principle. Men had more than an inkling that real politics, politics aiming at historical success, is a matter of training and not of shaping. This was no aristocratic prejudice, but a cosmic fact that emerges much more distinctly in the experience of any English racehorse-trainer than in all the philosophical systems in the world. Shaping can refine training, but not replace it.

And thus the higher society of England, Eton and Balliol, become training-grounds where politicians were worked up with a consistent sureness, the like of which is only to be found in the training of the Prussian officer-

corps. Trained, that is, as connoisseurs and masters of the underlying pulse of things (not excluding the hidden course of opinions and ideas).

Thus prepared, they were able, in the great flood of bourgeois-revolutionary principles that swept over the years after 1832, to preserve and control the being-stream which they directed. They allowed the great principles to move the mass because they knew well that it is money that is the " wherewithal " by which motion is imparted to these great principles.

And they substituted, for the brutal methods of the eighteenth century, methods more refined and not less effective – one of the simpler of these being to threaten their opponents with the cost of a new election.

The doctrinaire constitutions of the Continent saw only the one side of the fact democracy. Here, where there was no constitution, but men were in " condition," it was seen as a whole.

A vague feeling of all this was never quite lost on the Continent. For the absolute State of the Baroque there had been a perfectly clear form. But for " constitutional monarchy " there were only unsteady compromises. Conservative and Liberal parties were distinguished – not, as in England after Canning, by possessing different but tested modes of government, applied turn-and-turn-about to the work of governing – but according to the direction in which they respectively desired to alter the constitution – namely, towards tradition or towards theory.

Should the Parliament serve the Dynasty, or vice versa? – that was the bone of contention. In disputing over it, it was forgotten that *foreign* policy was the final aim. The " Spanish " and the misnamed " English " sides of a con-

stitution would not and could not grow together. Thus it befell that during the nineteenth century the diplomatic service outwards, and the Parliamentary activity inwards, developed in two divergent directions.

Each became in fundamental feeling alien to, and contemptuous of, the other. Life fretted itself to soreness in a form that it had not developed out of itself. After Thermidor, France succumbed to the rule of the Bourse, mitigated from time to time by the setting up of a military dictature (1800, 1851, 1871, 1918).

Bismarck's creation was fundamentally of a dynastic nature with a parliamentary component of decidedly subordinate importance. In it the inner friction was so strong as to monopolize the available political energy, and finally, after 1916, to exhaust the organism itself. The Army had its own history, with a great tradition going back to Frederick William I, and so also had the administration. In them was the source of Socialism, as one kind of true political "training," diametrically opposed to the English. But, like it, it was a full expression of strong race-quality.

The officer and the official were trained high. But the necessity of breeding up a corresponding political type was not recognized. Higher policy was handled "administratively" and minor policy was hopeless squabbling. And so army and administration finally became aims in themselves, after Bismarck's disappearance had removed the one man who, even without a supply of real politicians to back him, was big enough to treat both as tools of policy. When the issue of the World War removed the upper layers, nothing remained but parties educated for opposition only. And these brought the activity of Gov-

ernment down to a level hitherto unknown in any Civilization.

Today Parliamentarism is in full decay. It was a *continuation of the Bourgeois Revolution by other means*, the revolution of the Third Estate of 1789 brought into legal form, and joined with its opponent, the Dynasty, as one governmental unit. Every modern election, in fact, is a civil war carried on by ballot-box and every sort of spoken and written stimulus. And every great party-leader is a sort of Napoleon. This form, meant to remain infinitely valid, is peculiar to the Western Culture and would be nonsensical and impossible in any other. Here we discern once more our characteristic tendency to infinity, historical foresight and forethought, and *will to order the distant future* – in this case according to bourgeois standards of the present.

All the same, Parliamentarism is not a summit as the absolute Polis and the Baroque State were summits. It is but a brief transition – between the Late-Culture period with its mature forms, and the age of great individuals in a formless world.

It contains, like the houses and furniture of the first half of the nineteenth century, a residue of good Baroque. The parliamentary habit is English Rococo. Only in the brief periods of first enthusiasms has it an appearance of depth and duration. And then only because, in the flush of victory, respect for one's newly-won status makes it incumbent to adopt the high manners of the defeated class.

To preserve the form, even when it contradicts the advantage, is the convention which makes Parliamentarism

possible. But when this convention comes to be fully observed, *the very fact that it is so means that the essence of Parliamentarism has already been evaporated.*

The Non-Estate falls apart again into its natural interest-groups, and the passion of stubborn and victorious defence is over. Soon the form ceases to possess the attractiveness of a young ideal that will summon men to the barricades. Unparliamentary methods of attaining an object without (and even in spite of) the ballot-box make their appearance – such as money, economic pressure, and, above all, the strike. Neither the megalopolitan masses nor the strong individuals have any real respect for this form without depth or past. And when the discovery is made that it is *only* a form, it has already become a mark and shadow.

With the beginning of the twentieth century Parliamentarism (even English) is tending rapidly towards taking up itself the rôle that it once assigned to the kingship. It is becoming an impressive spectacle for the multitude of the Orthodox.[1] The centre of gravity of big policy, already *de jure* transferred from the Crown to the people's representatives, is passing *de facto* from the latter to unofficial groups and the will of unofficial personages.

The World War almost completed this development. There is no way back to the old Parliamentarism from the domination of Lloyd George and the Napoleonism of the French militarists.

As for America, hitherto lying apart and self-contained, rather a region than a State, the parallelism of President and Congress which she derived from a theory of Montes-

[1] The "Rubber-stamp Congress" that developed to a new peak under Roosevelt II would have provided Spengler with a convenient term applicable equally to the Reichstag and other European Parliaments of the time. E.F.D.

quieu has, with her entry into world politics, become untenable. It must in times of real danger make way for formless powers, such as those with which Mexico and South America have long been familiar.

With this enters the age of gigantic conflicts, in which we find ourselves today. It is the *transition from Napoleonism to Cæsarism*, a general phase of evolution. It occupies at least two centuries and can be shown to exist in all the Cultures.

The Chinese call it Shan-Kwo, the " period of the Contending States " (480–230, corresponding to the Classical 300–50). At the beginning are reckoned seven great powers. First planlessly, but later with clearer and clearer purpose, they tend to the inevitable final result of vast wars and revolutions.

In 368–320 (corresponding to the Second Punic War) the contest intensified itself into an uninterrupted struggle of the whole Chinese world, fought with mass armies, for which the population was strained to the extreme limit. " The allies, whose lands were ten times as great as those of Tsin, in vain rolled up a million men – Tsin had ever reserves in hand still. From first to last a million men fell," writes Sze-ma-tsien. Su-tsin began by being Chancellor of Tsin, but later became a supporter of the League of Nations (*Hoh-tsung*) idea; he went over to the Opposition, and worked up two great coalitions (333 and 321), which, however, collapsed from inward disunity at the first battles. His great adversary, the Chancellor Chang-I, resolutely Imperialist, was in 311 on the point of bringing the Chinese world to voluntary subjection. But a change of

occupancy of the throne caused his combination to miscarry. In 294 began the campaigns of Pe-Ki. It was in the prestige of his victories that the King of Tsin took the mystic Emperor-title of the legendary age, which openly expressed the claim to world-rule; this was at once imitated by the ruler of Tsi in the east.

With this began the second maximum phase of the decisive struggles. The number of independent states grew steadily less. In 255 even the home state of Confucius, Lu, vanished; and in 249 the Chóu dynasty came to an end. In 246 the mighty Wang-Cheng became, at the age of thirteen, Emperor of Tsin; and in 241, with the aid of his Chancellor Lui-Shi (the Chinese Mæcenas), he fought out to victory the last bout that the last opponent, the Empire of Tsu, ventured to challenge. In 221, sole ruler in actual fact, he assumed the title Shi (Augustus). This is the beginning of the Imperial age in China.

No era confronts its mankind so distinctly with the alternative of *great form* or *great individual powers* as this "Period of the Contending States." In the degree in which the nations cease to be politically in "condition," in that degree possibilities open up for the energetic private person who means to be politically creative – the person who will have power at any price, and who, as a phenomenon of force, becomes the Destiny of an entire people or Culture. Events have become unpredictable on the basis of form. We have now the accident of great fact-men. The accident of their rise brings a weak people (for example, the Macedonians) to the peak of events overnight. And the accident of their death (for example, Cæsar's) can immediately plunge a world from personally secured order into chaos.

This indeed had been manifested earlier in critical times of transition. The epoch of the Fronde, the Ming-shu, the First Tyrannis, when men were not in form, but fought about form, has always thrown up a number of great figures who grew too big for definition and limitation in terms of office. The change from Culture to Civilization, with its typical Napoleonism, does so too. But with this, which is the preface to unredeemed historical formlessness, dawns the real day of the great individual.

For us this period attained almost to its climax in the World War. In the Classical World it began with Hannibal, who challenged Rome in the name of Hellenism (to which inwardly he belonged) — and went under because the Hellenistic East, in true Classical fashion, apprehended the meaning of the hour too late, or not at all. With his downfall began that proud sequence that runs from the Scipios through Æmilius Paulus, Flaminius, the Catos, the Gracchi, Marius, and Sulla to Pompey, Cæsar, and Augustus.

In China, correspondingly, during the period of the "Contending States," a like chain of statesmen and generals centred on Tsin as the Classical figures centred on Rome. In accordance with the complete want of understanding of the political side of Chinese history that prevails, these men are usually described as Sophists. They were so, but only in the same sense as leading Romans of the same period were Stoics — that is, as having been educated in the philosophy and rhetoric of the Greek East. All were finished orators and all from time to time wrote on philosophy — Cæsar and Brutus no less than Cato and Cicero. But they did so not as professional philosophers, but because *otium cum dignitate* was the habit of culti-

vated gentlemen. In business hours they were masters of fact, whether on battle-field or in high politics. And precisely the same is true of the Chancellors Chang-I and Su-tsin; the dreaded diplomatist Fan-Sui who overthrew Pe-Ki, the general; Wei-Yang the legislator of Tsin; Lui-Shi, the first Emperor's Mæcenas, and others.

The Culture had bound up all its forces in strict form. Now they were released. "Nature" – that is, the cosmic – broke forth immediate. The change from the absolute State to the battling Society of nations, that marks the beginning of every Civilization, may mean for idealists and ideologues what they like. In the world of facts it means the transition from government in the style and pulse of a strict tradition, to the *sic volo, sic jubeo* of the unbridled personal régime.

The maximum of symbolic and *super*-personal form coincides with that of the Late period of the Culture – in China about 600, in the Classical about 450, for ourselves about 1700. The minimum in the Classical lies in the time of Sulla and Pompey, and for us will be reached (and possibly passed) in the next hundred years.

Great interstate and internal conflicts, revolutions of a fearful kind, interpenetrate increasingly. But the questions at issue in all of them without exception are (consciously and frankly or not) questions of unofficial, and eventually purely personal, power.

It is historically of no importance what they themselves aimed at theoretically. We need not know the slogans under which the Chinese and Arabian revolutions of this stage broke out, nor even whether there were such slo-

gans. None of the innumerable revolutions of this era — which more and more become blind outbreaks of uprooted megalopolitan masses — has ever attained, or ever had the possibility of attaining, an aim. What stands is only the *historical fact* of an accelerated demolition of ancient forms that leaves the path clear for Cæsarism.

The same is true also of the wars, in which the armies and their tactical methods become more and more the creation, not of the epoch, but of uncontrolled individual captains. These in many cases discovered their genius very late and by accident. (While in 300 there were *Roman* armies, in 100 there were the armies of Marius and Sulla and Cæsar.) And Octavian's army, which was composed of Cæsar's veterans, led its general much more than it was led by him.

But with this the methods of war, its means, and its aims assumed raw-natural and ferocious forms, very different from those prevailing before. Their duels were not eighteenth-century Trianon duels — encounters in knightly forms with fixed rules to determine when a man might declare himself exhausted; what maximum of force might be employed; and what conditions the chivalry permitted a victor to impose. They were ring-battles of infuriated men with fists and teeth, fought to the bodily collapse of one and exploited without reserve or restraint by the victor.

The first great example of this " return to Nature " is afforded by the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic armies, which, instead of artificial manœuvres with small bodies, practised the mass-onset without regard to losses, and thereby shattered to atoms the refined strategy of the Rococo. To bring the whole muscular force of a nation

on to the battle-fields by the universal-service system was an idea utterly alien to the age of Frederick the Great.

Similarly, in every Culture, the technique of war hesitatingly followed the advance of craftsmanship. At the beginning of the Civilization it suddenly takes the lead, presses all mechanical possibilities of the time relentlessly into its service, and under pressure of military necessity even opens up new domains hitherto unexploited. At the same time it renders largely ineffectual the personal heroism of the thoroughbred, the ethos of the noble, and the subtle intellect of the Late Culture.

In the Classical world, the Polis made mass-armies essentially impossible. Relatively to the general smallness of Classical forms, tactical included, the numbers of Cannæ, Philippi, and Actium were enormous and exceptional. The second Tyrannis (Dionysius of Syracuse leading) introduced mechanical technique into warfare, and on a large scale.

Then for the first time it became possible to carry out sieges like those of Rhodes (305), Syracuse (213), Carthage (146), and Alesia (52). Here the increasing importance of rapidity, even for Classical strategy, became evident.

It was in line with this tendency that the Roman legion, the characteristic structure of which developed only in the Hellenistic age, worked like a machine, as compared with the Athenian and Spartan militias of the fifth century. In China, correspondingly, iron was worked up for cutting and thrusting weapons from 474; light cavalry of the Mongolian model displaced the heavy war-chariot; and fortress warfare suddenly acquired outstanding importance.

The fundamental craving of Civilized mankind for

speed, mobility, and mass-effects – combined, in the world of Europe and America, with the Faustian will to domination over Nature – finally produced dynamic methods of war that even to Frederick the Great would have seemed like lunacy. But to us of today, in close proximity to our technics of transportation and industry, they are perfectly natural. Napoleon horsed his artillery, and thereby made it highly mobile (just as he broke up the mass army of the Revolution into a system of self-contained and easily moved corps). Already at Wagram and Borodino it had augmented its purely physical effectiveness to the point of what we should call rapid fire and drum fire.

The second stage is – most significantly – marked by the American Civil War of 1861–5 – which even in the numbers of troops involved far surpassed the order of magnitude of the Napoleonic Wars. Here, for the first time, the railway was used for large troop-movements, the telegraph-network for messages, and a steam fleet, keeping the sea for months on end, for blockade. Armoured ships, the torpedo, rifled weapons, and monster artillery of extraordinary range were discovered.

The third stage is that of the World War, preluded by the Russo-Japanese conflict. Here submarine and aircraft were set to work, speed of invention became a new arm in itself, and the extent (though most certainly not the intensity) of the means used attained a maximum.

But to this expenditure of force there corresponds everywhere the ruthlessness of the decisions. At the very outset of the Chinese Shan-Kwo period we find the utter annihilation of the State of Wu – an act which in the preceding Chun-tsiu period chivalry would have made impossible. In the peace of Campo Formio Napoleon out-

raged the *covenances* of the eighteenth century; and after Austerlitz he introduced the practice of exploiting military success without regard to any but material restrictions. The last step still possible is being taken in the peace treaty of the Versailles type, which deliberately avoids finality and settlement, and keeps open the possibility of setting up new conditions at every change in the situation.

The same evolution is seen in the chain of the three Punic Wars. The idea of wiping out one of the leading great powers of the world – which eventually became familiar to everyone through Cato's deliberately dry insistence on his "*Ceterum censeo Carthaginem esse delendam*" – never crossed the mind of the victor of Zama. And, for all the wild war-ethics of the Classical Poleis, it would have seemed to Lysander, as he stood victorious in Athens, an impiety towards every god.

The Period of the Contending States begins for the Classical world with the battle of Ipsus (301) which established the trinity of Eastern great powers; and the Roman victory over the Etruscans and Samnites at Sentinum (295), which created a mid-Italian great power by the side of Carthage. Then, however, the characteristic Classical preference for things near and in the present resulted in eyes' being shut, while Rome won, first the Italian south in the Pyrrhic adventure; then the sea in the first Punic War; and then the Celtic north through C. Flaminius.

The significance even of Hannibal (probably the only man of his time who clearly saw the trend of events) was ignored by all, the Romans themselves not excepted. It was at *Zama*, and not merely later at Magnesia and Pydna,

that the Hellenistic Eastern powers were defeated. All in vain the great Scipio – truly anxious in the presence of the destiny to which a Polis overloaded with the tasks of a world-dominion was marching – sought thereafter to avoid all conquest. In vain his entourage forced through the Macedonian War, against the will of every party, merely in order that the East could thenceforth be ignored as harmless.

Imperialism is so necessary a product of any Civilization that when a people refuses to assume the rôle of master, it is seized and pushed into it.

The Roman Empire was *not* conquered – the "*orbis terrarum*" condensed itself into that form and forced the Romans to give it their name. It is all very Classical. Whereas the Chinese states defended even the mere remnants of their independence with the last bitterness, Rome after 146 only took upon herself to transform the Eastern land-masses into provinces because there was no other resource against anarchy left. Even this much resulted in the inward form of Rome – the last which had remained upright – melting in the Gracchan disorders. And (what is unparalleled elsewhere) it was not between states that the final rounds of the battle for Imperium were fought; but between the parties of a city – the form of the Polis allowed of no other outcome.

Of old it had been Sparta *versus* Athens, now it was Optimate *versus* Popular Party. In the Gracchan revolution, which was already (134) heralded by a first Servile War, the younger Scipio was secretly murdered and C. Gracchus openly slain. When, in 104, the urban masses of Rome for the first time lawlessly and tumultuously invested a private person, Marius, with Imperium, the deeper impor-

tance of the drama then enacted is comparable with that of the assumption of the mythic Emperor-title by the ruler of Tsin in 288. The inevitable product of the age, Cæsarism, suddenly outlines itself on the horizon.

The heir of the Tribune was Marius, who in 87 murdered off the old aristocracy in masses. The heir of the Princeps was Sulla, who in 82 annihilated the class of the great merchants by his proscriptions. Thereafter the final decisions press on rapidly, as in China after the emergence of Wang-Cheng. Pompey the Princeps and Cæsar the Tribune – tribune not in office, but in attitude – were still party-leaders. Nevertheless, already at Lucca, they were arranging with Crassus and each other for the first partition of the world amongst themselves. When the heirs of Cæsar fought his murderers at Philippi, both had ceased to be more than groups. By Actium the issue was between individuals. Cæsarism will out, even in such a process as this.

In the corresponding evolution within the Arabian world it is, of course, the Magian Consensus that takes the place of the bodily Polis as the basic form in and through which the facts accomplish themselves. And this form, as we have seen, excluded any separation of political and religious tendencies, to such an extent that even the urban bourgeois urge towards freedom (marking, here as elsewhere, the beginning of the Period of Contending States) presents itself in orthodox disguise, and so has hitherto almost escaped notice. It appeared as a will to break loose from the Caliphate. The absolutism almost attained in the seventh century was then suddenly destroyed by the attack of Islam. In its *political* beginnings Islam was strictly

aristocratic. The handful of Arabian families everywhere kept the leading in their hands, and very soon formed in the conquered territories a new higher nobility of strong breed and immense self-sufficingness which thrust the dynasty down to the same level as its English " contemporaries " thrust theirs.

From Kufa the movement started which led to the downfall of the Ommaiyads and their *ancien régime*. The character of this movement – of which the whole extent has never to this day been observed – was that *of a social revolution directed against the primary orders of society and the aristocratic tradition.* It began among the Mavali, the small bourgeoisie in the East, and directed itself with bitter hostility against the Arabs, not *qua* champions of Islam but *qua* new nobility.

The Abbassids were anything but favourites with the insurgents of Kufa. It was only owing to their great diplomatic skill that they were first allowed a footing as officers and then – almost like Napoleon – were able to enter into the heritage of a Revolution that had spread over the whole East. After their victory they built Baghdad – a resurrected Ctesiphon, symbol of the downfall of feudal Arabism. This first world-city of the new Civilization became from 800 to 1050 the theatre of the events which led from Napoleonism to Cæsarism, *from the Caliphate to the Sultanate*. This, in Baghdad no less than in Byzantium, is the Magian type of power without form – here also the only kind of power still possible.

This is the phase, too, which in Egypt is concealed under the name of the " Hyksos." Between the XIIth and the

XVIIIth Dynasties lay two centuries, which began with the collapse of the *ancien régime* which had culminated with Sesostris III, and ended with the beginning of the New Empire.

The numbering of the dynasties itself suffices to disclose something catastrophic. In the lists of kings the names appear successive or parallel — usurpers of obscurest origin, generals, people with strange titles, often reigning only a few days. With the very first king of the XIIIth Dynasty the high-Nile records at Semne break off, and with his successor the archives at Kahun come to an end. It is the time out of which the Leiden Papyrus portrays the great social revolution:

"The higher officials are displaced, the land robbed of its royalty by a few madmen, and the counsellors of the old state pay their court to upstarts; administration has ceased, documents are destroyed, all social differences abolished, the courts fallen into the hands of the mob. The noble classes go hungry and in rags, their children are battered on the wall, and their mummies torn from the grave. Mean fellows become rich and swagger in the palaces on the strength of the herds and ships that they have taken from their rightful owners. Former slave-girls become insolent and aliens lord it. Robbery and murder rule, cities are laid waste, public buildings burned down. The harvest diminishes, no one thinks now of cleanliness, births are few — and oh, that mankind might cease!"

Here is the very picture of the megalopolitan and Late revolution, as it was enacted in the Hellenistic and in 1789 and 1871 in Paris. It is the world-city masses, will-less tools of the ambition of leaders who demolish every remnant of order, who desire to see in the outer world the same

chaos as reigns within their own selves. Whether these cynical and hopeless attempts start from alien intruders like the Hyksos or the Turks, or from slaves as in the case of Spartacus and Ail; whether the division of property is shouted for as at Syracuse or has a book for banner like Marxism – all this is superficial. It is wholly immaterial what slogans scream to the wind while the gates and the skulls are being beaten in. Destruction is the true and only impulse, and Cæsarism the only issue. The world-city, the land-devouring dæmon, has set its rootless and futureless men in motion; and in destroying they die.

The fall of the Government and the victory of the mass is followed by outbreaks of the army and the rise of ambitious soldiers. In Egypt from about 1680 B.C. appears the name of the " Hyksos " – a designation with which the historians of the New Empire, who no longer understood or wished to understand the meaning of the epoch, covered up the shame of these years. The Papyrus says: " the archer-folk from without " – that is, the barbarian mercenary troops. To these the native youth attached itself. These Hyksos, there can be no doubt whatever, played the part that the Armenians played in Byzantium.

In the Classical world too, the destinies of the Cimbri and Teutones would have gone the same way, had they defeated Marius and his legions of city *canaille;* they would have filled the armies of the Triumvirs again and again, and in the end probably set up barbarian chieftains in their place. The case of Jugurtha shows the lengths to which foreigners dared to go with the Rome of those days.

The provenance or constitution of the intruders does not matter – they might be bodyguards, insurgent slaves,

Jacobins, or purely alien tribes. What does matter is what they were for the Egyptian world in that century of theirs. In the end they set up a state in the Western Delta and built a capital, Auaris, for it. One of their leaders, Khyan by name, who styled himself, not Pharaoh, but "Embracer of the Country" and "prince of the young men" (names as essentially revolutionary as the *Consul sine collega* or *dictator perpetuus* of Cæsar's time) was a man probably of the stamp of John Tzimisces. He ruled over all Egypt, and spread his renown as far as Crete and the Euphrates. After him began a fight of all the districts for the Imperium, and out of that fight Amasis and the Theban dynasty eventually emerged victorious.

For us this time of Contending States began with Napoleon and his violent-arbitrary government by order. His head was the first in our world to make effective the notion of a military, and at the same time popular, world-domination. This was something altogether different from the Empire of Charles V and even the British Colonial Empire of his own day.

If the nineteenth century has been relatively poor in great wars — and revolutions — and has overcome its worst crises diplomatically by means of congresses, this has been due precisely to continuous and terriffic war-preparedness. This has made disputants, fearful at the eleventh hour of the consequences, postpone the definitive decision again and again, and led to the substitution of chess-moves for war. For this is the century of gigantic permanent armies and universal compulsory service. We ourselves are too near to it to see it under this terrifying aspect. In all world-

history there is no parallel. Ever since Napoleon, hundreds of thousands, and latterly millions, of men have stood ready to march, and mighty fleets renewed every ten years have filled the harbours. It is a war without war; a war of overbidding in equipment and preparedness; a war of figures and tempo and technics. And the diplomatic dealings have been not of court with court, but of headquarters with headquarters.

The longer the discharge was delayed, the more huge became the means and the more intolerable the tension. This is the Faustian, the dynamic, form of " the Contending States " during the first century of that period. It ended with the explosion of the World War.

The demand of these four years has been altogether too much for the principle of universal service – child of the French Revolution, revolutionary through and through – and for all tactical methods evolved from it. As an inspiriting idea it may be retained; translated into actuality it will never be again. The place of the permanent armies as we know them will gradually be taken by professional forces of volunteer war-keen soldiers; and from millions we shall revert to hundreds of thousands.

But *ipso facto* this second century will be one of *actually* Contending States. *These* armies are not substitutes for war – they are *for* war, and they want war. Within two generations it will be they whose will prevails over that of all the comfortables put together. In these wars of theirs for the heritage of the whole world, continents will be staked, India, China, South Africa, Russia, Islam called out, new technics and tactics played and counterplayed.

The great cosmopolitan foci of power will dispose at their pleasure of smaller states – their territory, their econ-

omy and their men alike – all that is now merely province, passive object, means to end. Its destinies are without importance to the great march of things. We ourselves, in a very few years, have learned to take little or no notice of events that before the War would have horrified the world; who today seriously thinks about the millions that perished in Russia?

Again and again between these catastrophes of blood and terror the cry rises up for reconciliation of the peoples and for peace on earth. It is but the background and the echo of the grand happening. As such, it is so necessary that we have to assume its existence even if, as in Hyksos Egypt, in Baghdad and Byzantium, no tradition tells of it.

Esteem as we may the wish towards all this, we must have the courage to face facts as they are. That is the hall-mark of men of race-quality. And it is by the being of these men that *alone* history is. Life, if it would be great, is hard; it lets choose *only* between victory and ruin – not between war and peace. And to the victory belong the sacrifices of victory.

That which shuffles querulously and jealously by the side of the events is only literature – written or thought or lived literature – mere truths that lose themselves in the moving crush of facts. History has never deigned to take notice of these propositions.

In the Chinese world Hiang-Sui tried, as early as 535, to found a peace league. In the period of the Contending States, imperialism (*Lien-heng*) was opposed by the League of Nations idea (*Hoh-tsung*), particularly in the southern regions; but it was foredoomed like every half-measure that steps into the path of a whole. It had van-

ished even before the victory of the North. But both tendencies alike rejected the political taste of the Taoists, who, in those fearful centuries, elected for intellectual self-disarmament – thereby reducing themselves to the level of mere material to be used up by others and for others in the grand decisions.

Even Roman politics – deliberately improvident as the Classical spirit was in all other respects – at least made one attempt to bring the whole world into one system of equal co-ordinated forces which should do away with all necessity for further wars. That was at the fall of Hannibal, when Rome forwent the chance of incorporating the East. But reluctance was useless. The party of the younger Scipio went over to frank Imperialism in order to make an end of chaos – although its clear-sighted leader foresaw therein the doom of his city, which possessed in a high degree the native Classical incapacity for organizing anything whatever.

The way from Alexander to Cæsar is unambiguous and unavoidable, and the strongest nation of any and every Culture, consciously or unconsciously, willing or unwilling, has had to tread it.

From the rigour of these facts there is no refuge. The Hague Conference of 1907 was the prelude of the World War. The Washington Conference of 1921 will have been that of other wars. The history of these times is no longer an intellectual match of wits in elegant forms for pluses and minuses, from which either side can withdraw when it pleases. The alternatives now are to stand fast or to go under. There is no middle course. The only moral that the logic of things permits to us now is that of the

climber on the face of the crag – a moment's weakness and all is over.

Today all " philosophy " is nothing but an inward abdication and resignation, or a craven hope of escaping realities by means of mysticisms. It was just the same in Roman times. Tacitus tells us how the famous Musonius Rufus tried, by exhortations on the blessings of peace and the evils of war, to influence the legions that in 70 stood before the gates of Rome; he barely escaped alive from their blows. The military commander Avidius Cassius called the Emperor Marcus Aurelius a " philosophical old woman."

In these conditions so much of old and great traditions as remains, so much of historical " fitness " and experience as has got into the blood of the twentieth-century nations, acquires an unequalled potency. For us *creative* piety, or (to use a more fundamental term) the pulse that has come down to us from first origins, adheres only to forms that are older than the Revolution and Napoleon – forms which grew and were not made. (This includes the constitution of the United States of America. Only thus can we account for the reverence that the American cherishes for it, even where he clearly sees its insufficiency.) Every remnant of them, however tiny, that has kept itself alive in the being of any self-contained minority whatever, will before long rise to incalculable values, and bring about historical effects which no one yet imagines to be possible.

The traditions of an old monarchy, of an old aristocracy, of an old polite society, in so much as they are still healthy enough to keep clear of professional or professorial politics; in so far as they possess honour, abnegation, dis-

cipline, the genuine sense of a great mission, sense of duty and sacrifice – can become a centre which holds together the being-stream of an entire people, and enables it to outlast this time and make its landfall in the future.

To be "in condition" is everything. It falls to us to live in the most trying times known to the history of a great Culture. The last race to keep its form, the last living tradition, the last leaders who have both at their back, will pass through and onward, victors.

By the term "Cæsarism" I mean that kind of government which – irrespective of any constitutional formulation that it may have – is in its inward self a return to thorough formlessness.

It does not matter that Augustus in Rome, and Hwang-ti in China, Amasis in Egypt and Alp Arslan in Baghdad, disguised their position under antique forms. The spirit of these forms was dead. And so all institutions, however carefully maintained, were thenceforth destitute of all meaning and weight. Real importance centred in the wholly personal power exercised by the Cæsar, or by anybody else capable of exercising it in his place. It is the *récidive* of a form-fulfilled world into primitivism, into the cosmic-historyless. Biological stretches of time once more take the place vacated by historical periods.

At the beginning, where the Civilization is developing to full bloom (today), there stands the miracle of the Cosmopolis, the great petrifact, a symbol of the formless – vast, splendid, spreading in insolence. It draws within itself the being-streams of the now impotent country-side – human masses that are wafted as dunes from one to

another or flow like loose sand into the chinks of the stone. Here money and intellect celebrate their greatest and their last triumphs. It is the most artificial, the cleverest phenomenon manifested in the light-world of human eyes – uncanny, too good to be true, standing already almost beyond the possibilities of cosmic formation.

Presently, however, the idea-less facts come forward again, naked and gigantic. The eternal-cosmic pulse has finally overcome the intellectual tensions of a few centuries. In the form of democracy, money has won. There has been a period in which politics was almost its preserve. But as soon as it has destroyed the old orders of the Culture, the chaos gives forth a new and overpowering factor that penetrates to the very elementals of Becoming – the Cæsar-men.

Before them the money collapses. *The Imperial Age, in every Culture alike, signifies the end of the politics of mind and money.* The powers of the blood, unbroken bodily forces, resume their ancient lordship. "Race" springs forth, pure and irresistible – the strongest win and the residue is their spoil. They seize the management of the world, and the realm of books and problems petrifies or vanishes from memory. From now on, new destinies in the style of the pre-Culture time are possible afresh, and visible to the consciousness without cloaks of causality. There is no inward difference more between the lives of Septimius Severus and Gallienus and those of Alaric and Odoacer. Rameses, Trajan, Wu-ti belong together in a uniform up-and-down of historyless time-stretches.

(Once the Imperial Age has arrived, there are no more political problems. People manage with the situation as it is and the powers that be.)

In the period of Contending States, torrents of blood had reddened the pavements of all world-cities, so that the great truths of Democracy might be turned into actualities, and for the winning of rights without which life seemed not worth the living.

Now these rights are won, but the grandchildren cannot be moved, even by punishment, to make use of them. A hundred years more, and even the historians will no longer understand the old controversies. Already by Cæsar's time reputable people had almost ceased to take part in the elections. It embittered the life of the great Tiberius that the most capable men of his time held aloof from politics, and Nero could not even by threats compel the Equites to come to Rome in order to exercise their rights. This is the end of the great politics. The conflict of intelligences that had served as substitute for war must give place to war itself in its most primitive form.

It is, therefore, a complete misunderstanding of the meaning of the period to presume, as Mommsen did, a deep design of subdivision in the " dyarchy " fashioned by Augustus, with its partition of powers between Princeps and Senate. A century earlier this constitution would have been a real thing. But that would in itself suffice to make it impossible for such an idea to have entered the heads of the present force-men. Now it meant nothing but the attempt of a weak personality to deceive itself as to inexorable facts by mantling them in empty forms.

Cæsar saw things as they were, and was guided in the exercise of his rulership by definite and unsentimental practical considerations. The legislation of his last months was concerned wholly with transitional provisions, none of which were intended to be permanent. This precisely

is what has generally been overlooked. He was far too deep a judge of things to anticipate development or to settle its definitive forms at this moment, with the Parthian War impending.

But Augustus, like Pompey before him, was not the master of his following, but thoroughly dependent upon it and its views of things. The form of the Principate was not at all his discovery. It was the doctrinaire execution of an obsolete party-ideal that Cicero — another weakling — had formulated.

The " co-operation " of the Senate and People was an antiquated ceremonial, with about as much life in it as the rites of the Fratres Arvales — also restored by Augustus. The great parties of the Gracchan age had long become retinues — Cæsarians and Pompeians. Finally there only remained on the one side the formless omnipotence, the plain brutal " fact," the Cæsar — or whoever managed to get the Cæsar under his influence; and on the other side the handful of narrow ideologues who concealed dissatisfaction under philosophy, and thenceforward sought to advance their ideals by conspiracy.

What these Stoics were in Rome, the Confucians were in China. Seen thus, the episode of the " Burning of the Books," decreed by the Chinese Augustus in 212, begins to be intelligible through the reproach of immense vandalism that the minds of later literates fastened upon it. These Stoic enthusiasts for an ideal that had become impossible had killed Cæsar: to the Divus-cult they opposed a Cato- and Brutus-cult. The philosophers in the Senate (which by then was only a noble club) never wearied of lamenting the downfall of " freedom "and fomenting conspiracies such as Piso's in 65.

It was with every justification that, in the presence of the corpse, Brutus called out the name of Cicero, while Antony, on his side, denounced him as the intellectual author of the deed. But this " freedom " meant nothing but the oligarchy of a few families; the masses had long ago become tired of their rights. Nor is it in the least surprising that Money was behind Intellect in the murder, for the great fortunes of Rome saw in Cæsarism the beginning of the end of their power.

Had this been the state of things at Nero's death, it would have been Sulla over again. That is why Nero put to death the Stoic Thrasea Pætus; why Vespasian executed Helvidius Priscus; and why copies of the history of Cremutius Cordus, which lauded Brutus as the last of the Romans, were collected and burnt in Rome.

These were acts of defensive State necessity *vis-à-vis* blind ideology — acts such as those we know of Cromwell and Robespierre. It was in exactly the same position that the Chinese Cæsars found themselves *vis-à-vis* the school of Confucius, which had formerly worked out their ideal of a state-constitution and now had no notion of enduring the actuality. This great Burning of the Books was nothing but the destruction of one part of the politico-philosophical literature and the abolition of propaganda and secret organizations.

This defensive lasted in both Imperia for a century. And then even reminiscences of party-political passions faded out, and the two philosophies became the ruling world-outlook of the Imperial age in its maturity.

The world was now the theatre of *tragic family-histories* into which state-histories were dissolved. The Julian-Claudian house destroyed Roman history; the house of

Shih-huang-ti (from 206 B.C.) destroyed Chinese; and we darkly discern something of the same kind in the destinies of the Egyptian Queen Hatshepsut and her brothers (1501–1447). It is the last step to the definitive.

With world-peace – *the peace of high policies* – the "sword side" of being retreats, and the "spindle side" rules again. Henceforth there are only *private* histories, private destinies, private ambitions, from top to bottom – from the miserable troubles of fellaheen, to the dreary feuds of Cæsars for the private possession of the world.

The wars of the age of world-peace are private wars, more fearful than any State wars because they are formless.

For world-peace – which has often existed in fact – involves the private renunciation of war on the part of the immense majority. But along with this it involves an unavowed readiness to submit to being the booty of others who do *not* renounce it. It begins with the State-destroying wish for universal reconciliation, and it ends in nobody's moving a finger so long as misfortune only touches his neighbour.

Already under Marcus Aurelius each city and each landpatch was thinking of itself; and the activities of the ruler were his private affair as other men's were theirs. The remoter peoples were as indifferent to him and his troops and his aims as they were to the projects of Germanic warbands.

On this *spiritual* premise a second Vikingism develops. The state of being "in form" passes from nations to bands and retinues of adventurers, self-styled Cæsars, seceding generals, barbarian kings, and what not. In their eyes the population becomes in the end merely a part of the land-

scape. There is a deep relation between the heroes of the Mycenæan primitive age and the soldier-emperors of Rome; and between, say, Menes and Rameses II.

In our Germanic world the spirits of Alaric and Theodoric will come again – there is a first hint of them in Cecil Rhodes. And the alien executioners of the Russian preface, from Jenghiz Khan to Trotski (with the episode of Petrine Tsarism between them) are, when all is said and done, very little different from most of the pretenders of the Latin-American republics – whose private struggles have long since put an end to the form-rich age of the Spanish Baroque.

With the formed state, high history also lays itself down weary to sleep. Man becomes a plant again, adhering to the soil, dumb and enduring. The timeless village and the " eternal " peasant reappear, begetting children and burying seed in Mother Earth – a busy, not inadequate swarm, over which the tempest of soldier-emperors passingly blows.

In the midst of the land lie the old world-cities, empty receptacles of an extinguished soul, in which a historyless mankind slowly nests itself. Men live from hand to mouth, with petty thrifts and petty fortunes, and endure. Masses are trampled on in the conflicts of the conquerors who contend for the power and the spoil of this world, but the survivors fill up the gaps with a primitive fertility and suffer on.

And while in high places there is eternal alternance of victory and defeat, those in the depths pray, pray with that mighty piety of the Second Religiousness that has overcome all doubts for ever. There, in the souls, world-peace, the peace of God, the bliss of grey-haired monks and her-

mits, is become actual — and there alone. It has awakened that depth in the endurance of suffering which the historical man in the thousand years of his development has never known.

Only with the end of grand History does holy, still Being reappear. It is a drama noble in its aimlessness — noble and aimless as the course of the stars, the rotation of the earth, and alternance of land and sea, of ice and virgin forest upon its face. We may marvel at it or we may lament it — but it is there.

CHAPTER 4

THE LAST GREAT TASK

"Here, for the first time, a Culture can foresee the way that Destiny has chosen for it."

THE FAUST of the Second Part is dying, for he has reached his goal. What the myth of Götterdämmerung signified of old, the irreligious form of it, the theory of Entropy, signifies today — *world's end as completion of an inwardly necessary evolution.*

It remains now to sketch the last stage of Western science. From our standpoint of today, the gently-sloping route of decline is clearly visible.

This too, the power of looking ahead to inevitable Destiny, is part of the historical capacity that is the peculiar endowment of the Faustian. The Classical died, as we shall die; but it died unknowing. It believed in an eternal Being, and to the last it lived its days with frank satisfaction, each day spent as a gift of the gods.

But we know our history. Before us there stands a last spiritual crisis that will involve all Europe and America. What its course will be, Late Hellenism tells us.

The tyranny of the Reason – of which we are not conscious, for we are ourselves its apex – is in every Culture an epoch between man and old-man, and no more. Its most distinct expression is the cult of exact sciences, of dialectic, of demonstration, of causality. Of old the Ionic, and in our case the Baroque, were its rising limb. And now the question is what form will the down-curve assume?

In this very century, I prophesy – the century of scientific-critical Alexandrianism, of the great harvests, of the final formulations – a new element of inwardness will arise to overthrow the will-to-victory of science. Exact science must presently fall upon its own keen sword. First, in the 18th century, its methods were tried out; then, in the 19th, its powers; and now its historical rôle is critically reviewed. But from Skepsis there is a path to "second religiousness," which is the sequel and not the preface of the Culture. Men dispense with proof, desire only to believe and not to dissect.

The individual renounces by laying aside books. The Culture renounces by ceasing to manifest itself in high scientific intellects. But science exists only in the living thought of great savant-generations. And books are nothing if they are not living and effective in men worthy of them. Scientific results are merely items of an intellectual tradition. It constitutes the death of a science that no one any longer regards it as an event; and an orgy of two centuries of exact scientificness brings satiety. Not the individual, but the soul of the Culture itself, has had enough; and it expresses this by putting into the field of the day ever smaller, narrower and more unfruitful investigators.

The great century of the Classical science was the third,

after the death of Aristotle. When Archimedes died and the Romans came, it was already almost at its end. Our great century has been the 19th. Savants of the calibre of Gauss and Humboldt and Helmholtz were already no more by 1900. In physics as in chemistry, in biology as in mathematics, the great masters are dead. We are now experiencing the *decrescendo* of brilliant gleaners who arrange, collect and finish-off like the Alexandrian scholars of the Roman age. Everything that does not belong to the matter-of-fact side of life – to politics, technics or economics – exhibits the common symptom. After Lysippus no great sculptor, no artist as man-of-destiny, appears; and after the Impressionists no painter; and after Wagner no musician.

The age of Cæsarism needed neither art nor philosophy. To Eratosthenes and Archimedes, true creators, succeed Posidonius and Pliny, collectors of taste; and finally Ptolemy and Galen, mere copyists. And, just as oil-painting and instrumental music ran through their possibilities in a few centuries, so also dynamics, which began to bud about 1600, is today in the grip of decay.

But before the curtain falls, there is one more task for the historical Faustian spirit, a task not yet specified, hitherto not even imagined as possible. There has still to be written a *morphology of the exact sciences*, which shall discover how all laws, concepts and theories inwardly hang together as forms and what they have meant as such in the life-course of the Faustian Culture. The re-treatment of theoretical physics, of chemistry, of mathematics as a sum of symbols – this will be the definitive conquest of the mechanical world-aspect by an intuitive, once more religious, world-outlook. It will be a last master-effort of physiog-

nomic to break down even systematic and to absorb it, as expression and symbol, into its own domain.

One day we shall no longer ask, as the 19th century asked, what are the valid laws underlying chemical affinity or diamagnetism. Rather, we shall be amazed indeed that minds of the first order could ever have been completely preoccupied by questions such as these. We shall inquire whence came these forms that were prescribed for the Faustian spirit, why they had to come to our kind of humanity particularly and exclusively, and what deep meaning there is in the fact that the numbers that we have won became phenomenal in just this picture-like disguise. And, be it said, we have today hardly yet an inkling of how much in our reputedly objective values and experiences is only disguise, only image and expression.

The separate sciences – epistemology, physics, chemistry, mathematics, astronomy – are approaching one another with acceleration, converging towards a complete identity of results. The issue will be a fusion of the form-worlds – which will present on the one hand a system of numbers, functonal in nature and reduced to a few ground-formulæ – and on the other a small group of theories, denominators to those numerators. The theories in the end will be seen to be myths of the springtime under modern veils, therefore reducible – and of necessity reduced – to picturable and physiognomically significant characters that are the fundamentals. This convergence has not yet been observed, for the reason that since Kant – indeed, since Leibniz – there has been no philosopher who commanded the problems of *all* the exact sciences.

Even a century ago, physics and chemistry were foreign to one another. Today they cannot be handled separately

– witness spectrum analysis, radioactivity, radiation of heat. While fifty years ago the essence of chemistry could still be described almost without mathematics, today the chemical elements are in course of volatilizing themselves into the mathematical constants of variable relation-complexes.

With the sense-comprehensibility of the elements goes the last trace of magnitude as the term is Classically and plastically understood. Physiology is becoming a chapter of organic chemistry and is making use of the methods of the Infinitesimal Calculus. The branch of the older physics – distinguished, according to the bodily senses concerned in each, as acoustics, optics and heat – have melted into a dynamic of matter and a dynamic of the æther; and these again can no longer keep their frontiers mathematically clear. The last discussions of epistemology are now uniting with those of higher analysis and theoretical physics, to occupy an almost inaccessible domain – the domain to which, for example, the theory of Relativity belongs or ought to belong. The sign-language in which the emanation-theory of radioactivity expresses itself is completely de-sensualized.

Chemistry, once concerned with defining as sharply as possible the qualities of elements, such as valency, weight, affinity and reactivity, is setting to work to get rid of these sensible traits. The elements are held to differ in character according to their derivation from this or that compound. They are represented to be complexes of different units which indeed behave (" actually ") as units of a higher order, and are not practically separable but show deep differences in point of radioactivity. Through the emanation of radiant energy degradation is always going

on – so that we can speak of the *lifetime* of an element, in formal contradiction to the original concept of the element and the spirit of modern chemistry as created by Lavoisier. All these tendencies are bringing the ideas of chemistry very close to the theory of Entropy, with its suggestive opposition of causality and destiny, Nature and History. And they indicate the paths that our science is pursuing – on the one hand, towards the discovery that its logical and numerical results are identical with the structure of the reason itself – and, on the other, towards the revelation that the whole theory which clothes these numbers merely represents the symbolic expression of Faustian life.

Here, as our study draws to its conclusion, we must mention the truly Faustian theory of " aggregates," one of the weightiest in all this form-world of our science. It is in sharpest antithesis to the older mathematic. It deals, not with singular quantities, but with the aggregates constituted by all quantities [or objects] having this or that specified morphological similarity; – for instance, with all square numbers or all differential equations of a given type. Such an aggregate it conceives as a new unit, a new *number of higher order*. It subjects it to criteria of new and hitherto quite unsuspected kinds, such as " potency," " order," " equivalence," " countableness "; and it devises laws and operative methods for it in respect of these criteria. Thus is being actualized a last extension of the function-theory. Little by little this absorbed the whole of our mathematic; and now it is dealing with variables by the principles of the Theory of Groups in respect of the character of the function and by those of the Theory of Aggregates in respect of the values of the variables. Mathematical philosophy is well aware that these ultimate

meditations on the nature of number are fusing with those upon pure logic, and an algebra of logic is talked of. The study of geometrical axioms has become a chapter of epistemology.

The aim to which all this is striving, and which in particular every Nature-researcher feels in himself as an impulse, is the achievement of a pure numerical transcendence. It is the complete and inclusive conquest of the visibly apparent and its replacement by a language of imagery unintelligible to the layman and impossible of sensuous realization. But it is a language that the great Faustian symbol of Infinite space endows with the dignity of inward necessity. The deep scepticism of these final judgments links the soul anew to the forms of early Gothic religiousness.

The inorganic, known and dissected world-around, the World as Nature and System, has deepened itself until it is a pure sphere of functional numbers. But number is one of the most primary symbols in every Culture; and consequently the way to pure number is the return of the waking consciousness to its own secret, the revelation of its own formal necessity.

The goal reached, the vast and meaningless and threadbare fabric woven around natural science falls apart. It was, after all, nothing but the inner structure of the " Reason " – the grammar by which it believed it could overcome the Visible and extract therefrom the True.

But what appears under the fabric is once again the earliest and deepest, the Myth, the immediate Becoming, Life itself.

The less anthropomorphic science believes itself to be, the more anthropomorphic it is. One by one it gets rid of

the *separate* human traits in the Nature-picture, only to find at the end that the supposed pure Nature which it holds in its hand is – humanity itself, pure and complete.

The final issue to which the Faustian wisdom tends – though it is only in the highest moments that it has seen it – is the dissolution of all knowledge into a vast system of morphological relationships. Dynamics and Analysis are – in respect of meaning, form-language and substance – identical with Romanesque ornament, Gothic cathedrals, Christian-German dogma and the dynastic state. One and the same world-feeling speaks in all of them. They were born with, and they aged with, the Faustian Culture, and they present that Culture in the world of day and space as a historical drama.

The uniting of the several scientific aspects into one will bear all the marks of the great art of counterpoint. *An infinitesimal music of the boundless world-space* – that is the deep unresting longing of this soul, as the orderly statuesque and Euclidean Cosmos was the satisfaction of the Classical.

That – formulated by a logical necessity of Faustian reason as a dynamic-imperative causality, then developed into a dictatorial, hard-working, world-transforming science – is the grand legacy of the Faustian soul to the souls of Cultures yet to be. It is a bequest of immensely transcendent forms that the heirs will possibly ignore. And then, weary after its striving, the Western science returns to its spiritual home.

Then, I see the *last* great task of Western philosophy, the only one which still remains in store for the aged wis-

dom of the Faustian Culture – the preordained issue, it seems, of our centuries of spiritual evolution.

No Culture is at liberty to *choose* the path and conduct of its thought. But here, for the first time, a Culture can foresee the way that destiny has chosen for it.

Before my eyes there seems to emerge, as a vision, a hitherto unimagined mode of superlative historical research that is truly Western, necessarily alien to the Classical and to every other soul but ours – a comprehensive Physiognomic of all existence, a morphology of becoming for *all* humanity that drives onward to the highest and last ideas; a duty of penetrating the world-feeling not only of our own soul, but of all souls whatsoever that have contained grand possibilities, and have expressed them in the field of actuality as grand Cultures.

To this philosophic view we and we alone are entitled, in virtue of our analytical mathematic, our contrapuntal music and our perspective painting. Its scope far transcends the scheme of the systematist, presupposes the eye of an artist – and of an artist who can feel the whole sensible and apprehensible environment dissolve into a deep infinity of mysterious relationships. So Dante felt, and so Goethe felt. To bring up, out of the web of world-happening, a millennium of organic culture-history as an entity and person, and to grasp the conditions of its inmost spirituality – such is the aim. Just as one penetrates the lineaments of a Rembrandt portrait or a Cæsar bust, so the new art will contemplate and understand the grand, fateful lines in the visage of a Culture as a superlative human individuality.

To attempt the interpretation of a poet or a prophet, a thinker or a conqueror, is of course nothing new. But to

enter a culture-soul – Classical, Egyptian or Arabian – so intimately as to absorb into one's self the totality expressed by typical men and situations, by religion and polity, by style and tendency, by thought and customs – this is quite a new manner of experiencing life.

Every epoch, every great figure, every deity – the cities, the tongues, the nations, the arts – in a word everything that ever existed and will become existent – are physiognomic traits of high symbolic significance. This it will be the business of quite a new kind of " judge of men " to interpret. Poems and battles; Isis and Cybele; festivals and Roman Catholic masses; blast furnaces and gladiatorial games; dervishes and Darwinians; railways and Roman roads; " Progress " and Nirvana; newspapers, mass-slavery, money, machinery – all these are equally signs and symbols in the world-picture of the past that the soul presents to itself and would interpret.

" *Alles Vergängliche ist nur ein Gleichnis.*" Solutions and panoramas as yet unimagined await the unveiling. Light will be thrown on the dark questions which underlie dread and longing, those deepest of primitive human feelings – questions which the will-to-know has clothed in the " problems " of time, necessity, space, love, death, and first causes.

There is a wondrous music of the spheres which *wills to be heard*, and which a few of our deepest spirits will hear. The physiognomic of world-happening will become the *last Faustian philosophy*.

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AMERICAN COMMUNIQUÉ, 1940

AMERICAN COMMUNIQUÉ, 1940

THE BATTLE waged in Spengler's pages against the wishful thinking of all the professional idealists of recent years might have seemed pointless and quixotic to the average American of the 1920's and '30's. Indeed, in the era pre-Roosevelt II, Spengler could not have served as a warning. For he was speaking not only of attitudes which numerous Americans warmly embraced, but above all of dangers in that embrace which the American people had not consciously experienced and so could not understand.

He was describing a world that Americans hopefully regarded as historically outmoded – a world where force prevailed, and ideals not backed with force, eager to fight, were powerless. At a time when men still had faith in treaties, he was declaring that only the strong nation could be free. In a day when personal rights and liberties seemed most important, he was asserting that national freedom would soon become the only issue, whatever sacrifice for the individual its guarding might mean.

Now, in the 1940's, we are becoming aware, however

dimly, that we indeed live in a world where pure force often wins; and wars if sufficiently ruthless can be made to pay – at least, pay somebody; and ideals must be fought for no less violently than booty, and power to rule; and dreadful fate overtakes nations which are not, as Spengler put it, " in form " for the life-conflict.

If, like the French and British peoples, we waited until the machines of another nation's Cæsarism were at our border before we sprang to meet the responsibilities that make both individuals and nations self-respecting, strong, and life-worthy, Spengler might indeed despair for our future.

Spengler, as previously noted, was seeking to view our present as from the vantage of long centuries, and to do it without regard for usual assumptions – often ideal assumptions – as to political, economic, and social cause and effect. Here, however faltering the attempt – and any such attempt in the midst of violent controversies must be faltering – an effort will be made to extend the Spengler point of view to a consideration of some of the problems immediately with us. It must be offered as merely suggestive. What degree of help this may be, to observers feeling their own way to an understanding of today's extraordinary history, must be left to the reader's own individual judgment.

Spengler, we might note in the very beginning, finds himself in complete historical agreement with our American concept of race. He defines race as a people assembled loyally around a common ideal and tradition. The origin of its components is unimportant even if known, so long as intuitive and emotional unity pervades the mass. He speaks of " blood " – but this term for him means stock

soundly trained in loyalty to the ideal, to discipline in its use, and self-sacrifice in its defence. He specifically mentions the American race as an example of the creation of a unique nation, from peoples ethnologically diverse. It is perhaps worth recalling in this connection that the prophet found no final honour in this own country; he and his books were not in favour with the new Cæsarism whose prophet he indeed had been. And we may judge that his historical agreement with our American concept of race must have played an important part in this ostracism.

But this implicit sympathy for our point of view could hardly lead Spengler to unconditioned optimism regarding the American outlook. For by implication he is perhaps not too hopeful about the American faculty for self-discipline. He sees this requiring a "tradition." And apart from emotional loyalties to our Constitution, we have frequently prided ourselves more on the flaunting of traditions than the reverse.

The freedom-tradition to Spengler is of course not a tradition at all; he calls it a negative value. For freedom, in Spengler's sight, too often degenerates into freedom *from* something – freedom from tradition, responsibility, and care. The masses that flock to the city want freedom from the demanding rhythms of the land. The politicians who thrive on them want freedom from any ultimate responsibility but that of feathering their own political nests. Numerous corporations want freedom from cares not too directly concerned with the making of a profit. The literati and intellectuals want freedom from any discipline that would raise even a question as to the value of unlimited free speech for speakers with nothing socially useful to say. Thus does Spengler see an ideal prostituted into a mere

slogan, under which a nation can disintegrate into national ruin.

Spengler's picture of the depths to which free irresponsibility can sink a nation would have seemed to most of us, only a few years ago, the prophecies of an unhappy man. Today we can readily look abroad to the fate of once great states. We have our signs of confirmation at home. As that ardent American, Dorothy Thompson, wrote in the first half of 1940: [1]

> We are threatened from without only because we have become weak within. That weakness is not primarily in lack of arms nor in the nefarious work of Fifth Columns. The latter merely exploit our weakness — as criminals and gangsters were exploiting it long before Fifth Columns were ever formed. . . .
>
> Born in liberty, we have forgotten the stern fact of liberty — namely, that it involves the highest degree of personal and group responsibility. . . .
>
> We contemplate leading a hemisphere, when we cannot decently govern ourselves. . . .

Such words of warning are not wholly distant from those that Spengler was writing almost a quarter-century ago, in years when the good American word "Republic" had not come to be avoided as "highbrow," and the word "democracy" had not been reduced to a cloak for things as various as the program of the Communists and the habits of the British ruling classes.

As for Spengler's disdain of the pure-bred "intellectuals," often too busy with their pallid "truths" to discover, until too late, the flaming facts of the world that glare around them — no phrases of his could be more biting than the 1940 words of the eminent poet recently

[1] *New York Herald Tribune,* June 3, 1940.

appointed Librarian of Congress. Said the American Archibald MacLeish:

Nothing is more characteristic of the intellectuals of our generation than their failure to understand what it is that is happening to their world. . . . It is not for nothing that the modern scholar invented the Ph.D. thesis as his principal contribution to literary form. The Ph.D thesis is the perfect image of his world.[2]

Even the Burning of the Books, noted by Spengler so long ago as in a "contemporary" period in China's culture, and seen now in our own times again, likewise begins by implication to take on native meaning for some on the American scene which few patriots would have recognized before 1940. That meaning was indirectly high-lighted by a talk of Mr. MacLeish before the American Association for Adult Education. Himself one of the nation's well-known writers of the post-'14 war generation, he recanted as follows:

The war books . . . were not only written against the hatefulness and cruelty and filthiness of war. They were also filled with passionate contempt for the statements of conviction, of purpose and of belief on which the war of 1914–18 was fought. . . .

These are the honest words of honest men: of writers of great skill, integrity and devotion. . . . But they are nevertheless words which have borne bitter and dangerous fruit. . . . The inevitable and natural effect of these words upon the generation which read them in childhood . . . we now witness. That generation was inoculated against any attempt in its own country by its own leaders to foment a war by shouting rhetorical phrases or waving moral flags. But it was left defenseless before an aggressor ready to force war *upon us*. . . .

[2] *The Irresponsibles:* Duell, Sloan & Pearce, Inc.

I am not undertaking to judge these writers. . . . I felt as they did and wrote, insofar as I was able, as they were writing. But I do undertake to maintain that what they wrote, however noble it may have been as literature . . . was disastrous as education. . . . Unless we regain in this democracy the conviction that there are final things for which democracy will fight . . . we can leave our planes unbuilt and our battleships on paper, for we shall not need them.[3]

Such comments reflect signs at many points which suggest that in the United States of America, no less than in Europe, the charts of a once obscure schoolteacher and the events of life are marching strangely abreast.

Spengler, let it be noted, did not write down the names of the nations that would live and fight successfully, and so survive this " Era of the Contending States," as he described our times.

Study of the same era, in the ancient Cultures of Egypt and China, of the Mayan state and the Classical World, led him to suspect that German power might finally prove today's most vital force. But he contented himself with the observation that today's survivor would be the last nation to stay " in form," as he liked to put it — meaning the last nation with sure traditions and the will to defend them successfully. (As with almost all prophets, he proclaimed only the " what " of the future; *how* it would happen was not an essential of his vision.)

Yet he did note, on the American scene, one source of great American strength. This was the American Constitution. The reverence which surrounded it he admittedly found hard to explain. But that very reverence he marked as evidence of one American tradition having much vital-

[3] *The New Republic*, June 10, 1940.

ity, and hence great influence and power – a tradition perhaps strong enough to rally the whole nation in its united defence. It might be noted, in passing, that no other nation has ever had a constitutional tradition of exactly this character – not even England, with her Magna Carta. It might be further noted that this fundamental strength does carry in it one seed of weakness – the possibility of so misinterpreting the Constitutional guarantees of personal liberties that they are abused as licence; whereupon old meanings pale, the will and strength to defend them pale, and discord deepens among those who should feel as one.

One of Spengler's fundamental thoughts seems so immediately relevant to the American position today that it deserves more discussion than it has been accorded.

It is found in his assertion that money, properly understood, is *a category of thought.* That is, he regards coins, bills, and bank money as symbols of values which are first born in the mind, and then live in the mind. The coin or bill is made only after the idea has been generated; its meaning and value may change as the idea changes; and it ceases to have meaning when the original idea dies – unless, indeed, a new idea adopts it.

Perhaps no one is in a better position to understand this apparently mystic Spengler concept than an American. Much of the point was illustrated, for instance, in the original Federal Reserve Act, which not only made commercial paper eligible for discount, but made its volume one of the chief determinants of the volume of money in circulation. Commercial paper, of course, represents an idea of value, plus a hope (backed by contract) that this value will be paid. When this is converted at a bank into money not

previously existing, the idea becomes new money in the exact Spenglerian sense.

Spengler makes much of the " organizing magnate " in modern economy, who merely by signing his name " vouches " for values, and thus has created money. If this seems obscure, consider what happens when a corporation expands into new properties by issuing its own securities. Those securities, once issued and validated, can be translated into dollar credits at a bank, and in effect create dollars that never existed before. The securities may represent, on the part of the seller, mostly hope and intentions surrounding a concept; and on the part of the buyer, merely confidence that these will reach fruition. But when these two sets of forces meet at a point, new money is born.

Even a small business man can be an organizing magnate in the Spengler sense. When, for instance, he goes to his bank and persuades it to provide funds with which he can pay some vendor immediately for goods, he too may be creating new money. For his note may be discounted under prescribed conditions with the Federal Reserve, meaning that new money is issued against it. When, in the past, sales have boomed in this country, millions of dollars were being created for the financing of that activity – just because responsible people had an idea of the value of a given transaction *to them;* and their signatures vouched for this value and served to turn it into money as real as any coins ever stamped at the mint. More real. For the product made at the mint may or may not be used as money; that depends on the mind and the mood of the people, as the New Deal puzzlingly discovered. But the money created by ideas went promptly into circulation.

Spengler's "organizing magnate," who can create millions of dollars just by signing his name, has actually been one of our most famous American types, headed perhaps by Henry Ford. Henry Ford's wealth, of course, consists not in dollars in the shape of coin and bills, but rather in the form of dollar credits. These credits he created by the sheer act of taking thought; and had he not created them, they never would have existed. He has literally originated money out of his head; and he has created what he needed to keep his great empire going, just as he originally created what he needed to get it started.

He has been one of many. Consider, for instance, the case of a young inventor gifted with an organizing temperament. He has no money capital; but he does have an idea. He translates this idea into enough cash, by initial borrowing, to start production on a small scale. A business begins; sales mount; profits are indicated; some bank opens up a line of credit to this organizer on the basis of profits shown; and now the whole enterprise begins to flower. A business originally worth a few hundreds of dollars may eventually grow to be worth millions. Profits are partly laid aside to make a surplus; original loans may all be paid off, and the business finally made almost independent of all bank credits. Whereupon it becomes practically a self-contained empire. But where did its money come from? Not from any mint. The original loan to start the business, obtained perhaps from friends, did probably represent money that previously existed. But thereafter the business generated its own capital. It created values that could be converted at will into cash. By buying supplies, paying wages, and stimulating desires, it generated the purchasing power required to buy its product and to keep the pro-

duction cycle in operation. Further, it also created the additional credits it laid aside as profit and surplus.

Instead of *it* we should probably say *he* or *they*. For as Spengler emphasizes, such work is in the compass only of few minds and personalities. He makes sharp distinction between those who can actually originate money values on the grand scale and the many who can only receive money. The industrial entrepreneur is a unique type. The " expropriation of the expropriators," recommended to the masses by Marx, draws from Spengler only jeers. The result would be either mass starvation through complete collapse of creative production; or else the rise of new entrepreneurs who would continue the functions of their predecessors, however differently their power was derived and exercised. As an analyst, it is Spengler who seems likely to be confirmed by events.

The function of the entrepreneurial mind, in creating wealth that is immediately translatable into purchasing power and money credits, has been viewable in its entirety on an automobile production line. Here it is essentially organizing genius – pure idea – that made the difference between wealth and poverty, success and failure. An almost perfect instance was seen in the Chrysler transformation of a defunct automobile enterprise – one without hope, and millions in debt to the bankers – into the Chrysler Corporation of today. Under Chrysler, new ideas and human organization were put into exactly the same plants that produced bankruptcy for Maxwell-Chalmers; and these plants, newly organized, made so much money that not only were the old debts completely cleared away in a few years, but whole new properties, including Dodge, had been bought and paid for, with millions paid out mean-

while as wages and dividends, and more millions put into surplus.

The Chrysler Corporation today values its " goodwill " at one dollar and its buildings and equipment in millions. But if the executives who are the generating heart of Chrysler Corporation disappeared, the buildings might bring in pitifully little as junk; and the machines and tools they house could be largely scrap iron. Yet destroy the buildings overnight and leave the creative heart of the organization intact, and those executives might have a new and better group of production facilities functioning within a year, with perhaps as much wealth shown on the balance sheet as ever. Thus if the goodwill item on the balance sheet is to be taken as the name for the skill and experience and organizing genius that is Management, this is the item that should be valued in the millions; and the whole physical plant could well be written down to one dollar. It is the cogency of the idea and nothing else that has created most American dollar values in the past – a fact never to be forgotten in a nation that has seen many a plant's value vastly multiplied by a mere reorganization of its production processes.

Such were some of the economic facts in our Culture which to Spengler seemed basic. They account, by implication, for other phenomena. For instance, the reiterated insistence of certain labour leaders that " labour " should be represented on boards of management is the one question that management always has refused to negotiate. Management has insisted this would be equivalent to its abdication from its function. For this would mean dilution of the money-creating force with a non-creative force only capable of receiving money after it has been made –

unless, of course, the labour representative had the management type of mind, whereupon he would not be a labour representative at all. Actually, when labour does sit authoritatively beside management, it is a sign that the money-creating function has passed to other hands.

Money created by the thinking of entrepreneurs was the mainstay of our money stream for a full century after the industrial revolution. It was a century of unprecedented industrial and financial development and organization; of phenomenal invention; of wide areas of free trade under the pre-1914 British Empire policies; of almost unrestricted migration, to take care of Europe's increasing population; and, finally, of vast extension of " democratic liberties."

But then, in 1929, something happened. A time came when the issue of entrepreneurial money suddenly began to contract – in the United States, as well as Europe. The continuing contraction for half a generation has been coincident with revolution, dictatorship, and war, throughout the world. Most Americans, at the time, looked on the halt in the money flow as merely another " depression," such as had often made temporary interruptions in the past. But Spengler had forecast, more than a decade previously, the near approach of an event of rather different character.

Spengler's statement was that the money power finally thinks its world through to completion; whereupon its money comes to an end. This is a concept which warrants some examination. Considered purely as a hypothesis, it may throw some light on a problem which has been harassing our society for lengthening years.

Spengler, of course, was not referring to any idea that a time comes when organized society functions without money at all. He was rather asserting that the kind of money we had known would finally reach the end of existence. The sober *Annalist* perhaps had in mind something of the same distinction between kinds of money, when it once asserted that Roosevelt had produced a new "ticket dollar." In much the same way it is possible to say that today's German mark (there are in fact several marks), no less than the English pound, is a ticket currency only vaguely related to money of the same name in use for many generations prior to the world upheavals of our time. By the same token, they are subject to different controls, just as they are of rather different origins and in many ways have different functions.

What Spengler said, a quarter-century ago, was that *entrepreneurial money* was to reach a conclusion — the sort of money associated with democratic capitalism, the sort of money America's industrial organizers had created so generously and so well.

Now, it is a decline in the creation of this sort of money which has been one of the severest problems in our economy since 1929, as practically all economists recognize. Many reasons for the decline have been sought. The industrialists have blamed the politicians; the politicians, pointing out that they at least were not interfering when the fall began in 1929, have blamed the industrialists. The one certainty is that a graph of bank investments shows brokers' loans, commercial loan holdings, and paper declining, and large increases in holdings of government bonds. The bonds, that is, now provide a basis for issuing volumes

of money that in former times were supported by entrepreneurial activity. To state the matter in Spengler's terms, the money-creating entrepreneurs ceased in 1929 to manufacture money in the quantities they had previously turned out; they ceased to " think " it so freely. Eventually the government stepped in, and supplied another sort of money to fill the gap, and issuances of this other sort have increased as the decline in issuance of entrepreneurial money continued.

This is no purely American phenomenon. It has been even more striking in certain other industrialized nations than our own, including England, France, and Germany. In Germany its swift developments helped speed the Hitler revolution; in France it helped bring in the Blum government, which in turn hurried on the death of the *République;* in England the phenomenon, misunderstood, ended in the disasters of the Chamberlain régime; and in the United States it began with an unprecedented " depression " that led to the Roosevelt victories.

The exact meaning of all this may only become clear to distant historians, who will at least have the advantage of retrospect. To Spengler, it appeared that the creative industrialism of our culture would finally reach the end of its creative cycle; the sort of money that had emanated from it would thus tend to decline too; the political power would thereupon rise over the old money-power, and a new cycle would begin.

In America, where entrepreneurial money has achieved its most magnificent world triumphs, the idea that it could ever permanently decline in power and influence is still strange, challenging, and even repugnant to many estab-

lished ways of thinking. The creation of this money has for years been regarded as a fundamental of " the American way." Industrialists and bankers, for years the generating heart of the system, have naturally tended to insist that, whatever went wrong in 1929, the breakdown was only temporary; given another chance without Rooseveltian impediments, they could start the old-time money promptly flowing again.

Mr. Roosevelt, on the other hand, together with his advisers, has tended at least tentatively to hold the Spenglerian thesis, in American form. That is, they asserted that many of the old " frontiers " for profitable investment had ceased to exist, and thus government must undertake new monetary duties in the economy. They believed that new kinds of procedures in the creation and investment of capital were necessary. Time can alone give us the verdict as to the correct interpretation. But it is to be noted that what Roosevelt called the disappearance of the old " frontiers " was almost exactly what Spengler himself seems to have had in mind, when he said that the money power would eventually think its world through to a conclusion.

Those who bitterly disagreed with Mr. Roosevelt's thesis in the 1930's had, admittedly, more hopes than actual evidence to support their point of view. They spoke, for instance, of the unlimited possibilities inherent in new invention, research, and the industries to be founded thereon. If the forest was once the frontier for American youth, and this was closed, still today there was a whole galaxy of laboratories.

The visions of this school were almost perfectly exemplified in the New York World's Fair of 1939, where the World of Tomorrow became, in so many industrial ex-

hibits, just a more perfectly mechanized and abstract version of the same sort of life America long had known. Thus General Motors spent a small fortune with Norman Bel Geddes for a Futurama – to show a more exquisite version of the old dream of two cars in every garage, designed for airplane-like speeds on arteries somewhat like those Hitler had introduced in Germany for rapid troop movements. By what government business such arteries would be financed; what the people sailing over them would be thinking and wanting; and what such mass migrations could have as goals to warrant the labour cost to be spent on them, were realistic questions not to be asked in viewing such a dreamland. Yet it was possible to see, even as people were lining up to gasp at the Futurama, that these things were indeed a kind of fantasy, already being exploded by 1939 events abroad, if not at home. The pleasant perpetuation of an endlessly stable universe, and of endless "progress" extending past patterns, which the promoters of this Fair were taking for granted, was like the Fair itself – a concept of cardboard and plaster, ready to be overthrown by any good whirlwind. By 1940, when the European whirlwind had really come, and all the Fair's foreign pavilions had become mere tombs for memories, such facts were growing clear to all. In the world as it was, American industry had undoubtedly reached the end of at least one cycle; and whatever lay ahead, it would certainly be no mere magnification of the past.

All of this is something more than symbolic; it has stout political and economic meaning. It illustrates on a miniature world-scene the whole conflict between the hope and the destined reality on which Spengler insists so earnestly. He would sympathize with, but not console, those Ameri-

cans who tend to view the future as the extension of yesterday's straight-line graph. This is what Spengler specifically denies as a possible theory of history. He insists the graph does not mount toward infinity in any such a manner — just as no tree ever grew but that it contained its own limitations of possible growth.

Thus Mr. Roosevelt, talking about the ending of old frontiers, was being graphic in the Spenglerian sense — however much by accident. And his opponents, unwilling to consider the possibility that a new cycle of world history and American destiny was at hand, were being optimists in the best and truest American tradition, even though events should prove them wrong.

Yet for men of responsibilities, the recognition of events for what they are can be almost a condition of survival, in times when the sound appraisal of today's history can be the determinant of tomorrow's existence.

But what is the real meaning of events? The world-wide decline in money-thinking by business. The millions of unemployed that appeared almost simultaneously in all the industrialized nations, and persisted until they were given jobs by government or put to work in armies. The universal fall in profits, the universal and despairing quest for security, the universal disruption of old values in every category. Dictatorship. War.

Since 1914 we have lived through enough history to fill hundreds of books with only the bare record of dates; we swim daily through a sea of interpretations, commentary, and analysis; and despite all we experience and know and read, most of us are as surprised at each next turn of history as we were at the last.

Either the Spengler thesis should be helpful in eliminating some part of this daily surprise, while giving past events a meaning beyond that of pure accidental catastrophe, or else the Spengler theory of history has no core of meaning at all.

In the present American era Spengler's key to events seems supplied in terms of his theory of money. In using this key, to see if it unlocks new meaning in American history since 1929, we must above all guard against applying our familiar assumptions as to cause and effect.

Without such assumptions, we may note in retrospect that by 1929 American entrepreneur-capitalism had in general gone just about as far as in our time it seems destined to get, in any present outlook. That is, the thirties were to be a period of unprecedented economic panic at home, and disruption abroad; and the forties, as we now may judge, were to be a period of world war, world revolution, and final dissolution of many of the familiar patterns that had prevailed in the Western Culture for several hundred years – even through the first World War. Thus no one would any longer say that the " normalcy " once praised by Mr. Harding has any chance of being restored in our time, however one defines the term to apply to the political and economic scene.

Whether the financial crash, world-wide, that came after 1929 might have occurred shortly after 1914, had war then not intervened, is an academic question; some students have unimportantly thought Yes. We at least know that after 1918 there was to be only one more decade of operating our economy in the old ways. In this final decade the American economic system did manage to reach new heights of apparent progress. But it is possible to assert that

this was done only while adopting measures suicidal in their nature. The reference here is to the vast foreign loans made by American capital in this period – loans which could not be repaid, on any terms the American people would accept.

For a while these loans did give the system the superficial look of health. But the process was quite comparable to the act of a starving man who slits his wrist, drinks his own blood, and manages to run another mile.

By 1929 this mile had been run, and further pump-priming of capitalism by its own life-blood was impossible. That is, to make any further foreign loans was unthinkable, on the basis of the very logic that had been extending them. But to stop making them would start the wrecking of the whole placid world in which they had been made. This was the dilemma – a dilemma without any apparent solution. It is exactly such a dilemma that marks the ending of every thought-process – that indicates the necessity for moving into a completely new frame of thought before further progress can be made. American capitalism of the old style had indeed thought its current world through to a kind of finality.

Subsequent propaganda was to deny this violently; but being unrelated to the deeper realities of the time, it was to have no great influence in the flow of overwhelming economic and political tides which some men would ride, but no King Canute could halt by conventional decree. The collapse of those years is still too near to need description. One thing stood out – the money-generating minds all over the world very generally felt themselves in an impasse. However stoutly this was later denied, no one remembering the dark fears whispered then in high places

will ever quite forget them. No one quite knew how to start the money flowing again – the old credit money from the banks. As a matter of fact, no one really did start it up again, under its own power – though in subsequent years in America hopes flared anew, off and on, many a time. Instead of that, the continent of Europe was presently to pass into an entirely new kind of money economy, climaxed by the advent of Hitler, in 1933. It was in the same year that Roosevelt took office and started money circulating again in the United States.

But here, as in the other industrialized economies of the West, it was in many ways a new kind of money, with a different flow. The new flow, everywhere, would almost exactly reverse the direction of the old. Under the old system, the money moved from business to government, via mild taxes, after business had first created it; this is the essence of voluntary saving and capital-making, in a world where capital and credit find risks tolerable and even inviting. In the new scheme, the money would flow from government to business; this is the essence of deficit-financing and/or forced saving, in a world where capital and credits find most risks unthinkable.

Further, this money would seem to act in different ways. For instance, economists who concentrated their attention on the available money volume, in the traditional fashion, confidently predicted inflation in the traditional manner. To the contrary, however, hoarding mounted. American money circulation by 1940 had reached unprecedented totals. Yet, Roosevelt in an entire eight years did not succeed in forcing either prices or national income up to the level he originally set as a goal. Commodity prices, in

America as elsewhere, continued soft. People did not " invest " as they used to. Instead of collecting commodities or stocks as formerly, they tended to collect money instead. At home, the dollars were piled up in bank accounts. In Europe, American paper dollars were imported by the millions and retained. We see in such hoarding, in short, the dawn of a tendency to regard money in the category of " wares," as Spengler described the trend in days when entrepreneurs would no longer be the chief money source.

Blessed henceforth would be those business men with the acumen to move up fast to a seat at the new money fount – whether in Berlin or London or Washington. Even the money to support foreign trade would now be generated by government. The adventures of foreign governments along this line we need not explore. The billions of foreign gold purchased in the thirties by Washington served now to do the work of the foreign credits of quite comparable volume that had been generated by the American capitalists in the twenties.

A new kind of world was appearing, still full of wreckage and bitter dogfights over the possession and management of the wreckage, but also full of wholly new thoughts and concepts. In such an order the old dreams of idealists like Mr. Hull, longing for a world of mutual trade treaties, sanctity of international contracts without force behind them, and justice equal between the weak and strong, would remain just – dreams.

And the longings of younger men for the economic patterns that existed when entrepreneurs could dream of an industrial empire and thus automatically create the money to establish it seemed also doomed. Taxes, labour regula-

tions, wage regulations, security-marketing regulations, were examples of forces destined to offer entrepreneurs discouragement.

Henceforth governments were taking a vast share of money's functions into political hands – including money's creation, operation, and management. Money and credit were now to be treated as a creation of the *nation*, and not merely that of its individual members. In greater or lesser degree, it was to be handled dictatorially by the political powers – just as money is always handled dictatorially by its creators – who could even withhold it from groups which dared their hostility or displeasure.

Now, this was, in effect, a revolution. That it occurred in the United States without the masses being generally aware of its ultimate significance is due largely to the fact that money is such an abtruse subject that perhaps no one understands it fully – and the masses understand it almost not at all. But the money power must be the ruling power in a highly specialized society such as our own; and when this changes hands, the revolution is just as real as though armed bands of newcomers had seized government buildings.

If this seems clear, then the basis of the bitter opposition to Roosevelt becomes at least clearer. Many new presidents had appeared in Washington in the past. But none of them previously had been in fact a revolutionary president. And just here one may sense part of Roosevelt's heavy personal burden. For he was not the creator of this revolution; it was a world event; it was occurring in every highly industrialized nation of the West, in some form or other; and the new power was thrust in the Washington leader's hands in 1932–3 almost through an abdication,

however qualified, by the entrepreneurs of their functions. Thus Roosevelt, for the sake of national unity, had one overwhelming duty – first, himself to understand the truly universal nature of these events; and then, by whatever recourse, to weld to himself the complete loyalty, understanding, and co-operation of the entrepreneurs who had wielded the supreme power in the past. Otherwise dangerous schism was bound to result. His failure here will be reverted to later.

The older entrepreneurial money would of course continue indefinitely to flow, in some degree, under increasing government regulation, and in lesser quantities. Further, opportunities for individuals outside politics to create profitably were by no means wholly ended. So long as the government remained stable, and continued piping its own money flow out into the economy, wheels would turn and commerce would continue and profits could be ticked off, and superficially no great changes would be evident.

Thus, for some years after 1932, the creative industrialists and financiers who had made America great could enjoy the illusion that they were still performing their full money-creating functions as of yore – or at least that they were capable of so doing, if only the government could be completely reformed. As specialists only in the field of industry, they did not study the related events beyond our own borders; they did not explore the world-overtones of the 1929–32 period, when they had tried so eagerly, and unsuccessfully, to keep the money stream from drying up in its beds; and they tended to forget their sudden flush of relief in 1933, when the money stream was attached to a new reservoir at Washington, and sustenance again started to flow into the nation's veins. Now, full of life again,

they could clearly see the many defects of the Washington reservoir and its management, and could be wholly sincere in arguing for some kind of (at least) attempted return to the old system, with the major money powers restored to their own hands. There prevailed a general optimism that history could somehow be reversed.

This can now be seen as only an expression of hope, and not of complete understanding. For when, in 1940, the United States joined the ranks of all the other surviving powers in preparing to move from a government-deficit economy, assumed to be temporary, into an armament economy, with statesmen the masters, the futility of most such hopes became rather obvious. The fine free world that the creative entrepreneurs had created and so long maintained was now done for, whether it was to vanish in war or mere preparations for war.

For a few years yet we shall perhaps remember in the United States the general "lack of confidence" which so many business men proclaimed in Mr. Roosevelt and his New Deal. Undoubtedly these men were wholly sincere. Many really believed that if some magic could reform Mr. Roosevelt and his brain trust, or wipe them away, the old-time profits would begin to roll in again; prosperity would reign; attractive six-per-cent investments would show up everywhere; and life in the forty-eight American states could then march on to new levels of achievement according to old-time patterns.

But by 1940 it began to be clearer that forces vaster, greater, and more important even than Mr. Roosevelt really underlay the American lack of confidence during the 1930's. At worst, Mr. Roosevelt was merely a single

symptom of conditions in the world organism. For we now can behold, in retrospect, that there was no possible basis in the 1930's for a show of confidence by capitalists and entrepreneurs, in the usual sense. That is, capital invested anywhere in the world in the 1930's would be neither safe nor secure for long – though it would certainly be far better off in the United States, at least for a while, than anywhere else. Nor could such invested capital draw a money return consonant with the risks it would have had to shoulder – as we also see now. For the world was already on the verge of the fearful and revolutionary events of the forties, when capital would be confiscated or destroyed on a hitherto unprecedented scale, even compared with the first World War; and still more vital, the systems under which this capital had previously operated would in many instances be shattered probably beyond repair in calculable time.

Indeed, by 1940 it was possible to look back and say that for years the world's entrepreneurial markets had been *subconsciously* discounting future events which most people could not consciously grasp. Thus the lack of confidence which American business men thought they felt in the presence of Mr. Roosevelt was, more fundamentally, a lack of confidence in an entire world outlook. On such a basis it was wholly justified.

But the very world conditions which rendered investment confidence untenable would have been, for Spengler, evidence that capital-creating thought had reached the close of a cycle in its own particular world. Thereafter he would see political considerations becoming paramount. He would see the men who made the political decisions as the new rulers of national activity and thought – super-

seding the men of industry and finance, who had been the determined makers of circumstance, and thus of confidence, for so long. In previous times, they had been able to make conditions what they pleased, in order to create for their work the *milieu* they required. When the day came that conditions could only be rued, the sign of an ending was perhaps already there. Here, in the confidence problem, was revealed nothing less than the initial victory of the political power over the money power, in the struggle which Spengler had predicted.

Events in foreign dictatorships such as Germany would reveal the victory on such stages clearly, inasmuch as money there had ceased to exist at all, except on the dictator's terms. But in America under Roosevelt there were corresponding signs, even if not so boldly written. The decrees of Schacht and the regulations of the S.E.C. might differ enormously in kind, degree, and purpose; but they both signified the banker-industrialist fall from self-determination and the rise of a higher power. The confiscations of capital ordered from Rome and the reductions in interest rates scheduled in Washington might seem disparate phenomena; but both showed the advent of a day when the wealthy could maintain old levels of capital and/or income only through political sufferance.

There looms at least one certainty. Truly creative men — the men who want great power to build what they dream of greatly, the sort of men who once worked their way to the top in banking, market-manipulation, and the control of great manufacturing and distribution organisms — will now tend to reach for the political control that can bring them entrée into these other realms automatically. And this must be equally true for men who seek power

for power's sake alone. Thus Spengler, telling young men of the future to go into politics, once more saw true.

When, finally, one of Roosevelt's most able and determined opponents abandoned the industrial arena from which he had been leading his opposition and took a presidential nomination in order to wage his battle more effectively, evidence mounted that America was beginning to understand a new category of facts. For when power has emigrated to the seat of politics from the seat of industry and finance, when the nods of the entrepreneurs are no longer obeyed in the Capitol, then the men who want power must enter politics forthwith. And when, conversely, they do enter politics, they confirm power's departure from the fields in which they had previously wielded its sceptre and prerogatives.

A further conclusion suggests itself; and it, too, stems from Spengler. Spengler insists that, in these times, programs become increasingly unimportant. In the Thurman Arnold sense, the important thing is to do the necessary, whatever the rituals required to satisfy the mind while it is being done. Amassing the power to do it is the goal. To Spengler, behind all the slogans and the fight over apparent ideas, the struggle for power emerges ever more clearly. In an age that has been torn by the war of various idea systems, their ultimate unimportance is hardly demonstrable; but events like the attempted British-Russian pact, and the successful Hitler-Stalin deal, have made it evident to some who might otherwise have remained unconvinced.

Yet the career of Roosevelt II had even previously written indications of it on the front pages. For it is to be noted that some of his most bitter critics were those who had lost influence under him rather than money; indeed, the

Roosevelt measures often served to better the financial fortunes of various self-proclaimed enemies who had almost been collapsing under Mr. Hoover. The devout enmity felt for Roosevelt by so many could not be adequately explained on any other than a power-loss basis. The very passion with which they advanced to debate him helps confirm this. For people do not become impassioned in debating ideas unless these are essential to their ego-being. Nor were the concepts thus fought over always rooted in any consistent conviction, as when good Republicans suddenly found themselves willing to lay down their political lives for states' rights. Ideas in many a category had at last become pure weapons, to be picked up or laid down in accord with the strategy of the tilt; and those who failed to recognize this often became the servants of those who did. And, indeed, egos could not help being the basic human issues in debates over legislation which served to register the subtraction of vast influence from many who had long regarded power and money as interchangeable factors. The indignant millionaire who threatened to take his fortune away to Canada, where it would buy him respect, was something more than a symbol.

The Constitution of the United States makes possible a concentration of power in the chief executive quite as great as that of any South American dictator or European leader, as we learned under Wilson. Spengler asserts confidently that in times of emergency the government at Washington will naturally tend to assume such a " formless " character — one, that is, where the executive transcends the traditional limitations on the authority of his office and develops the authority to do what he believes the situation requires. We have seen such a " formless " ex-

tension of power under Roosevelt II, who took office in a time of recognized emergency, and administered it in a period of deepening international revolution that was not always recognized by some of his critics for what it truly was.

There is no reason now to suppose that the present period of emergency for the United States will pass for a number of years; for ours is a rich nation *vis-à-vis* an increasingly hungry and hostile world. There is thus every ground for expecting Roosevelt to be followed by other men who will be strong men in quite the same tradition — manipulating Congress, the courts, the organs of publicity and opinion, and the vote in much the same way and with more or less success. There is nothing particularly un-American in such an outlook. And, indeed, even the most theoretical "liberal" would hardly venture to wish our nation to be endowed with a weak government in Washington, in any future we can now foresee.

Party labels and party dogmas meant little enough in 1932, as was to be shortly shown thereafter. They will doubtless mean even less in the 1940's. Already our parties tend to become only instruments for dynamic men who choose to use them. The chief question underlying all campaigns is more and more *who* shall wield the power. In such times as ours it is a wholly proper question. And it is a proper hope, for the sake of the nation, that the man who does wield the power will know, as a statesman, how to unite the people — including, not among the least, the entrepreneurs.

It took some years for some even of our most thoughtful idealists to see the advance upon us of such facts. But by 1940 a loyal liberal like Walter Lippmann could write:

To prepare for war is to organize and direct industry and investment for the national purposes, and not to let them be managed [exclusively] for private profit.

Both parties will, therefore, find that their old principles and slogans have become obsolete, and that the task of organizing this nation in a world of armed totalitarian states will call for a rapid and a radical revaluation and readaptation of their mental habits.[4]

It was this development, in a new cycle of events, that Spengler was trying to analyze and clarify a generation ago. And in so far as such a statement of it is sound, it is plain that much of the debate of the subsequent twenty years now has only academic interest. It is doubtless human that many who have the patterns of a lifetime at stake will try to avoid such admissions, even to themselves, until the twelfth hour – just as happened in England and France and half a dozen other countries. But such timidity is hardly a bulwark for the United States of America, which henceforth will need courageous leadership in generous measure.

That America controls the gold supply of the world would hardly aid it, in Spengler's view, in preserving for itself the older and perhaps happier economic patterns elsewhere already discarded. Spengler's declaration that gold, in our Western economy, is an adjunct of Classical thought that could disappear without effecting any change in our history has to some degree been confirmed beyond argument. Who, at least, now remembers the names of the economists who predicted the swift collapse of Italy, Germany, and Japan because they lacked the gold that would give their currencies the conventional stability and back-

[4] *New York Herald Tribune*, June 9, 1940.

ing? While some observers waited for that collapse, Germany provided herself with weapons sufficient to disrupt the economic life, and threaten even the existence, of most of the gold-standard countries of the world. Meanwhile her price level seems to the German worker to have had less fluctuation than that experienced in prices by workers in gold-standard countries.

Germany, lacking gold, promptly proceeded to organize an economic system where that lack would be a political advantage rather than a handicap, and thereafter enforced the system on her neighbours. It is now recognized that her undertaking may provide us with one of our major American problems for tomorrow; even so, not all the implications are yet plain. Thus the value of our gold store is admittedy questionable for purposes of international hegemony, in the event of Germany's war victory. But we must also recognize that a victorious yet bankrupt Britain might herself have no other choice than to perpetuate under the British flag the Nazi system of money-making and trade-making that Hitler and Schacht first devised. It is no less possible that Britain and Germany may some day find themselves, even yet, in an anti-American alliance; even stranger fears have materialized. Finally, remembering the fatal attempt of France to use her gold supply to organize in her favour the balance of power in Europe, we need not be too optimistic in assuming we can rely on our own gold to hold our dominance even in our own hemisphere. Any more than France could rely on it yesterday, or we today, to obtain adequate armaments.

The facts of history have in recent times done more to confirm Spengler than to sanctify the traditional economic theories. The statesmen will no doubt take note. History

even yet may prove that a nation which makes itself a true power in today's world no longer needs gold as a national holding – except, perhaps, to advertise its might, and to symbolize this in visible, tangible forms which even the senses of unimaginative men can grasp. There were great, highly organized empires of old which thus seem to have displayed their gold in statues, and on roofs.

An interesting problem is raised by the fact that much of what Spengler wrote has foreshadowed some of the essence of today's German *Weltanschauung*, as determined and organized by Hitler. The disciplines which Hitler established in a spiritless nation within seven years' time, and used to raise that poverty-stricken people to *the* first-class military power of the world, reflect Spengler judgments and predictions time and again.

Hence the question: Did Hitler borrow from Spengler part of the recipe for creating a mighty state that would survive this Era of the Contending States? If not directly, did he borrow hints from some of the sources that perhaps had already influenced Spengler's judgments, such as the writings of the German Chamberlain? Or did Spengler see the future so clearly that he could actually describe the philosophy that would guide the new history-makers? It is doubtless too soon to know or to pass judgment. No one is yet in a position to explain Hitler – the man whom most of the world first ridiculed, then tried to ignore, then excoriated with wishful prophecies of certain failure, then viewed in terror as he strode on. But one thing may be said: In so far as the Spengler theory of history is a tenable hypothesis, Hitler is to be regarded not as a Cause, but

merely as an Instrument, of the changes in which Spengler would see Destiny at work. In the same way Roosevelt in a different scene would be viewed as the mere sign of forces in action (in so far as he was a positive force) and not as their progenitor.

This can be, at least within limits, a useful view, in that it permits a rather calm, dispassionate appraisal of men and events while one must deal with them; accurate judgments concerning opposed forces can sometimes best be made in such detachment. Nor is it even an unreligious view for Christians to whom Destiny is the Will of God, working mysteriously through ill and good its wonders to perform.

In the realm of facts, as opposed to theories here, one thing does seem certain: In the Spengler phrase, a nation's only choice now must be to stand firm or to go under. Whether Hitler is the force or the mere symbol of it is here immaterial. There doubtless will always be some individuals who prefer to die rather than submit themselves, for the sake of their nation's own freedom to act, to new personal disciplines. Or at least there will always be some who say so. Whether they would still say it if thrust unarmed outside the ramparts, as a first-line sacrifice to an onrushing enemy, is an academic problem. It has never been decided by experiment. And such folk will hardly be present, in any important numbers, in a nation that has the intent to hold its own on the stage of the world, and the means to implement its will to such a freedom.

A nation may of course disavow any such will, and passively bow to the stronger life-urges of another more dynamic, numerous people. Probably, in the present stage of history, a small state, however highly developed and or-

ganized, has no other choice. It would seem wholly improbable that the United States of America is so drained of its vitality or so infirm.

That at this stage a great nation has no choice but to move forward into Imperialism is a statement Spengler has underlined. What we see in Europe is doubtless – in one of its aspects – a revolutionary struggle to overthrow old balances of power, by states eager for an expanded imperial rôle of their own. The American people, whose imperial urges in the past have so often been capped with their regrets, whether in the Philippines, in South America, or in our Panama affair, would indubitably like to stay clear of any new imperialistic undertakings. The Good Neighbour program, of Hull-Roosevelt origin, was essentially an attempt to declare the United States finished with force as an implement of policy in its hemisphere – just as immediately previous Republican policy had been to regard treaty-making as a substitute for force in American world-relations. Spengler denies the reality of such possibilities for any nation that holds to leadership in this era.

What he means, perhaps, is in one sense a derivative of his views regarding " form." For survival in independence, a nation must be highly disciplined, organized, cohesive. But – you can seldom successfully gear up a nation to permanent defence of its *status quo*. People satisfied with what they have, and desiring only to be left alone, usually make rather poor defenders of their position, at least during times of stress – as various conservatives have individually demonstrated too well in recent years. The very fact that one is satisfied with one's present can unfit one psychologically for defending one's future against a

determined, dynamic aggressor. It is not difficult to arouse a nation to fervour, self-discipline, and new achievement if your object is to galvanize it into dynamic moves toward new national goals – as Hitler, not uniquely, demonstrated. But it can seem well-nigh impossible if you merely want to arouse your countrymen to hang on to what they've got – as Mr. Churchill learned through the effort of years.

It is a point that Stalin and Mussolini seem to have taken to heart, *vis-à-vis* Hitler. Under external pressure from another dynamic people, the aggressive imperial rôle can seem the required solution even for a nation primarily interested only in self-defence. We may suspect that Spengler would hardly be hopeful for our own future, from the long-term historical view, if we ourselves failed to take notice and resolved on an attempt to sit a world cyclone passively through.

The course the reverse of passivity – that of dynamic action – could hardly seem to consist in an attempt to maintain the American *status quo* by trying to bolster up the uncertain empires of other peoples. To Spengler the nation is an organism in the same sense as a Culture; thus no weakened one can be resuscitated to aid another, as England recently learned to her horror in the case of France, and France had learned as regards Poland. Rather would the reverse, and dynamic, course, seem to lie along the lines of positive action already forecast by certain commentators who have not always enjoyed a friendly audience – owing at least partly to the unwillingness of some Americans to think calmly and solely in terms of the American interest, potentialities, and destiny, as opposed to the faded ideals of Wilsonian internationalism.

The national interest, in short, would probably tend toward the eventual stewardship of the United States over much of the territory around it in the Western hemisphere, however much against our conscious will. Preferably, this would be undertaken with the friendly co-operation of less potent neighbours. Mr. Hull's 1940 Pan-American Conference in Havana was a move toward that end. Whether success matures co-operatively or not, the goal will doubtless have to be attained. Territories making attractive bases for aggressive foreign powers, or so governed as almost to invite the infiltration of excessive foreign influences, will doubtless have to come into the political orbit of the United States, however reluctant the will on either side. Even more is a stern possibility. For its own protection, as well as the stability and well-being of its neighbours in an age of international economic revolution, the United States may eventually have to play a leading rôle in so reorganizing a good part of the hemisphere economy that the Americas can form a complementary trade map, to a degree at least far higher than now.

This, of course, will demand a rare order of diplomacy, finesse, and national tact. Many of the peoples around us are directed by a highly cultured ruling class worthy of cultivation by our most talented representatives. But this does not mean we can rely on mere talent in human relations. As with men, so with peoples: the *politesse* of someone who wields great power is far more highly valued than the same attitude in a social nonentity. We shall not be able to use courtesy as a cheap substitute for armaments.

Further, neighbour territories which presumed without consultation with the United States to declare war on foreign powers – yet were so poor in resources and in

population that they invited defeat, thus threatening to draw the United States through its Monroe Doctrine into the disasters of unplanned conflicts – these may some day end by seeing the United States take over complete control of their foreign policy, if not still more.

For no nation of force and character will long endure a situation in which a weaker, satellite people make the decisions that may determine its own choice of peace or war. A nation which did so resign itself passively to the deciding policies of another and lesser people would seem to be even weaker by comparison, and even less fitted for the struggle to survive.

Nor would a dynamic policy of this character even preclude a " Union Now " proposal – in so far as that union were organized and directed primarily to serve the national interest of the continental United States, and not to make it the body-servant of another power.

Matters like these were becoming clearer, as 1940 wound its course, to prideful Americans able to see historic facts looming through the veils of propaganda, wishful thinking, and controversy.

But such realistic attitudes, as Spengler might call them, have more than a mere strategic meaning. There are important psychological implications. When a nation has once been awakened to the realization that a given course of dynamic action is vital to protect its life and its future, the problem of getting that nation into " form " is in large share already solved.

If recent years offer one lesson more than another for the United States, it is that internal economy and its organization can be relatively unimportant, except in refer-

ence to external events. Spengler's statement is that a nation does not exist alone in the world.

Roosevelt II, for many years, devised a good part of his executive policy as if the United States did effectually so exist. That is, our foreign policy was laid out on the theory that the American interest could be identified with that of all other peoples worth our national notice – Mr. Hull's trade treaty policies being examples – and domestic policy was pursued as if production of goods at a profit, and equitable profit-distribution, would be our chief national problems for years to come. It may be said, unfortunately, that some of the administration's severest critics themselves had no larger horizons – much as in France neither M. Blum nor the stockholders in the Banque de France looked up from their quarrels to observe the neighbours over the border.

Indeed, for far more years than Roosevelt's Presidency, there was a tacit American assumption that the external security of the United States was assured; thus foreign policy could consist in instructing other powers what to do, and public attention could be focused on domestic battles associated with plans for the fuller life at home. Mr. Hoover, for instance, with his passion for disarmament and his party slogan hailing the full dinner-pail, did not differ so greatly from Mr. Roosevelt in some essentials as he doubtless liked to think.

To read Spengler's specifications for the Statesman with Roosevelt in mind is an interesting exercise. The Rooseveltian technique of ruling autocratically in the framework of parliamentary and democratic processes – his sense of timing, his command of the radio, his way with the vote – all this would have won Spengler's admiration for a master

in the craft. And the Roosevelt luck – as when deaths combined to give him the Supreme Court reformation previously denied him by a temporarily rebellious Congress – would have seemed to Spengler the mark of a Destiny man. All men of Destiny, Spengler said, must have a strong element of luck on their side.

But in an extremely important aspect Spengler could have felt strong reservations as to Roosevelt's final place in history. For to Spengler the foremost test of a Statesman is his ability to keep his nation harmonious and unitedly industrious at home, while making it wise and formidable in all its affairs abroad. He is the gardener of the people; it is his to sense their possibilities, cultivate these, train them high on the walls of history. And there are times, too, when he must prune mercilessly, and dare so to do – " He dares to ask – *and* obtains sacrifices." And with all he must mould into a complete harmony all his garden assortment of colours, races, creeds.

Judged by any such exacting standard, Roosevelt's record in two full terms would seem hardly to meet the Spengler requirements. He had come to office in a distraught nation. He held it in the midst of a bitterly disunited one, unable to draw his people together into purposeful harmony, and unsuccessful in building any new American prestige in the world abroad.

The one goal he held forth consistently – the more abundant life – was as materialistic in essence as the " prosperity " of his predecessors. It was hence as sterile, and as doomed to fruitlessness. Abundance sustained, like character and happiness, seems to be possible only as a by-product of activity directed to other ends, in every period of history.

In the long run, when his people were no nearer the goal than at his administration's beginning, Roosevelt had suddenly to face world realities and move his nation on into the very armament economy he had so long denounced in foreign states. Nor were his people the better prepared for this move by the things he had taught them before. The despised Mussolini had at least never ceased to warn his people that they lived in a desperate world and should at all times be prepared to tighten their belts. With Roosevelt the expectations seem to have been rather the reverse.

As a leader, he liked to intimate, as Destiny began pounding America's door, that he had been expecting her all the time, and had indeed been almost uniquely aware. But his policy for years seemed to have shown a lack of full prescience. If one judges from that policy, and not from words, he seems really to have believed – with many of his critics – that America lived in the kind of world where its major problem would be the economic and legal machinery for domestic maintenance of the more abundant life in perpetuity. And when thunder actually began to boom in the skies, his people were ready neither mentally nor physically to face the facts of the world in which – after politics has conquered the money power – the various political powers begin their own epochal struggle for world mastery.

Thus in the beginning of the forties the United States stood almost friendless among the nations, with strong potential enemies in either ocean. Without any known plan for defence, if very apparent dangers materialized, we had balanced our strategic hopes on three shaky legs: First, that all the formless oligarchies and dictatorships of South America would act like the " democracies " they had been

cajolingly called, and so would work in loyal concert with the United States. Second, that the British Empire, which had fruitlessly sacrificed a Czechoslovakia to save itself, with bell-ringing and pious joy, could still be relied on to save the United States of America – if America could meanwhile save Britain first. Third, that the thing called "American Moral Strength" in Fourth of July orations could be trusted to triumph over enemies of however superior weapons and fighting organization and guile.

Such bland optimism as such a situation revealed would doubtless have left the realistic Spengler aghast. That eminent Republicans announced their agreement with the Roosevelt "foreign policy" – confining their differences to domestic squabbles, and squabbles over matters often historically irremediable, at that – this could have seemed to Spengler merely the ultimate in national misfortune, in a time of disasters.

Spengler made a military prophecy well worth noting. The day of the effectiveness of the mass army is ending, he said. He saw the time of the highly organized shock army, the highly trained professional soldier, again about to dawn. This would have been stoutly denied by most military experts even as late as 1939. Now, when we have seen the new German system of warfare, a system that alleged only 10,000 deaths in taking Poland, and conquered the British in Norway with less than 150,000 troops in action, a new picture begins to emerge. The highly mechanized army of the future may not use the millions of combat troops that the British and French General Staffs were thinking of even as late as 1940. As John Elliott reported to the *New York Herald Tribune* from the French front:

It was the elite armored corps, and not the masses of the German Army, which brought about the undoing of France. It is said that actually France has been overrun and conquered by about 150,000 men who compose these Panzer divisions.

In this regard, the views of Spengler, no less than the military strategy of Hitler, may both seem of some encouragement to all Americans – or at least to all Americans determined that in a day of advancing empire the United States shall still stand vitally supreme in its hemisphere and make that hemisphere's law.

For we are like the Germans not only in inventiveness, but in our knowledge of the machine; and we, too, can think with the machine. Indeed, the Germans and the Americans are the only two peoples in the world who can meet each other, face to face as equals, in this all-important aspect of today's national power. We both are also masters, by derivation, in the realm of mass production on the assembly line which the machine makes possible – whether the decision be for mass production of things that make life or of things that make death.

If fate so determines, then, we have the technique and the trainable men ready to contend for the mastery of our world. If we as yet do not have a political and social organization necessary to make the equation work, before such mastery can be fought for, we can still hope to achieve this, too.

We can have only one other formidable rival – the Germanic Empire. But are there not grounds for hoping that, once we ourselves are fully armed and organized, we shall not have to meet the open conflict?

As Henry R. Luce has written so cogently:

America will never be ready for any war, not in one year, not in two nor in twenty – never until she makes up her mind that there is going to be a war. And equally, as soon as she makes up her mind there is going to be a war, then there is no war she will have to fight that she cannot win. And then, and then only, there might not be any war at all – not because God granted us a miracle, but just because, at that moment, other nations might suddenly discover they are too proud to fight.[5]

No nation unable to save itself can be saved by another; nor can it live to aid another. This was the lesson of 1914–18 that was destined to be read at last in 1940. And it is worth repeating endlessly in a day when our people must make themselves daring and strong. The man who thinks of nations and empires in the sense of Spengler's *organisms* will perhaps grasp this historical fact instinctively; for it is basically a biological fact.

If enough of our people can understand this much in time, this era still holds great hope for the future of our country. For its corollary is that we should ourselves be strong enough to need no allies to hold our hand in battle. Only powers strong enough *not* to need friends can hope to gain them and hold them for long. One of the greatest of today's editorial writers summed this truth up as follows in the pages of the *Saturday Evening Post:*

Among nations, the weak adhere to the strong not in friendship and affection, but because they are weak; and the strong, all the more for that, shall be hated and feared. All else is wan-

hope, in the key of Edna St. Vincent Millay, saying:

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[5] *Why England Slept*, by John Kennedy. With an Introduction by Henry R. Luce. Wilfred Funk, Inc.

Oh, build, assemble, transport, give,
That England, France and we may live . . .
Lest . . . we be left to fight alone.

In that spirit no great nation lives, nor had this one of ours ever been born.[6]

That holds much of what Spengler was trying to say over twenty years ago to a nation like our own. His warning re-echoes from the news dispatches every day.

Is there even now time left, before some assault comes, to give ourselves the strength that will match our pride? Here an almost unprecedented burden falls on our national leadership. Not only, on the one hand, must it sense the facts clearly and unite the people to face them boldly; for a while it must also manœuvre and temporize and bargain with the other powers that be, feinting and parrying, seizing every slight possible advantage to gain the time required to do the necessary. What temporary policies and expedients such a need will necessitate, only a statesman is adequate to judge. For on him falls one of the supreme tests mentioned by Spengler – the ability to turn impending disaster into decisive success. The barbed cliché about the democracies that always snatch defeat from the jaws of victory might now, if given one more point in American foreign policy, make a final epitaph on our history as a first-class power. We can at last afford no more mistakes.

If, on the other hand, our national leadership is gifted enough to bring our nation – still in many ways politically naïve – successfully through the temporary dangers that now loom so clearly, the while we swiftly organize, then the ultimate outlook is satisfying enough. When we have

[6] Garet Garrett, "Who is Friend?" Reprinted by special permission of *The Saturday Evening Post*, copyright 1940 by The Curtis Publishing Company.

achieved our potential strength and are so organized and united, politically and socially, that we retain it, any other great power then existing could find it wise not to dare to presume upon us.

Then the "Decline of the West" that Spengler described would be for us, at least, only a "decline" into long years of relative peace and, possibly, security.

That is the destiny which Spengler saw following, in his charts, for those nations which now stand strong and in form and so survive this era whole. Not, perhaps, that we should meanwhile escape all fighting; this is not a program for pacifists; it is far from an escape for the weak. But we could be strong enough to choose our wars and the time of fighting those wars, and could thus choose to fight those we could win.

We already have behind us, in the Spengler sense, a good part of the conflict of the money revolution. Roosevelt may be said to have won it for the Presidency, almost by default. In Germany the industrialists lost the conflict when they allied themselves with Hitler, hoping thereby to retain the control. In France they lost it when their quarrelling intransigence so weakened the state that it fell a victim to foreign enemies. In England they lost it finally when they sought to ally themselves with Hitler, offering first Spain, and then Czechoslovakia, as the purchase price; and then, rebuffed, tried unsuccessfully to win an ally in Stalin. Here, in the United States, the control was lost to the political power without any of the attendant moral disgrace in evidence elsewhere; and there are thus grounds for hoping that our entrepreneurs will finally accept the issue – which Spengler would see as Destiny – without too much continuance of the post-mortem dissension

which could rend us apart. Our great entrepreneurs henceforth have everything to gain by working with the state, and through the state; and they and the nation alike may face only fatal loss if they misread today's history and vainly defy the new might of the political power. It is true that deep schisms still survive among us as a result of the misunderstandings of recent years. But if these are not, foolishly, still further deepened; if our leadership acts promptly, henceforth, either to eliminate them or to immunize the nation against their debilitating poison – then for the rest we may hope to escape much of the fate that has racked Europe.

If we do arouse swiftly to concerted act, and not to more wishful thinking; if we can be politically astute enough; if we dare to make ourselves socially, economically, and militarily strong enough – we should come through this hard period without too much loss, and probably with great gain. And Spengler would then be the first to assure us of the waiting prospect of long, quiet days of empire ahead.

So America could doubtless endure indefinitely, if the Spengler readings are correct – unless its children should some day lose their verve and so become soft victims for the hard, hungry marauders that appear regularly in history, to topple over whole states of unresistant " civilization " with a handful of men.

That is beyond our control. Beyond the duty of passing on to our future generations a goodly heritage, we can be responsible only for living our own Destiny in the world of our time. Spengler would indeed hope for us that we shall recognize that Destiny clearly, and live it well.

E. F. D.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Oswald Spengler was born May 29, 1880, in Blankenburg in the Harz Mountains. We are told that he was the son of a postal official, and of a mother who was sister to Adele Grantzow, a famous dancer of her time. Spengler, who in later years obscured all facts about his life, set down only the statement that his family had been engaged in the mining business.

His birth date shows that when the first volume of *The Decline of the West* was published, in 1918, he was just thirty-eight years old. Padraic Colum once wrote in the old *Dial* that "twenty years, at least, must have gone to the shaping and illustrating of his idea." That would have made Spengler only eighteen when he was seized with his concept. Spengler himself has said that it was in 1911, at the time of the Agadir incident, when the idea first took form in his mind; he was then thirty-one. We may perhaps accept both statements, in a general way.

The internal evidence of the work suggests the picture of a youth reading voraciously in every odd hour and many an odd place, scouring museums avidly, climbing to the lofts of theatres, sitting long hours through concerts, exploring all the far avenues to cultural lore which the rich university life of that time in Germany made possible – meanwhile perhaps unconscious of seeking any unifying concept of life, and merely absorbing and trying to catalogue information with encyclopædic facility.

The first volume of *The Decline of the West* seems in many ways the written record of such a quest, put down rapidly after the real meaning had dawned. The second volume, written largely after 1918 and first published in 1922, presents in rather more satisfying form the thesis which organizes the whole and ties the facts together. A more practised writer, and more disciplined, might have reversed the order of the presentation, giving the reader a view of the full hypothesis before leading him, by many tortuous paths, through the arts and sciences of all the Cultures Spengler thought he could distinguish in recorded history.

That his work, instead, has some of the format of a Ph.D. report recalls the fact that Spengler previously had published only his doctor's thesis on *Heraclitus*, before *The Decline of the West* brought him to fame. Of what actually happened to him and "shaped" him, in his own sense of the word, before his appearance on a world stage, we have only the scantiest knowledge. He had few friends, rebuffed all attempts to peer into his personal life, and lived alone even at the height of his great success, with only servants to care for him. In 1922, when men now forgotten were accorded half a column or more in *Wer ist's?* – the German *Who's Who* – Spengler permitted publication only of a few lines about himself, detailing his schooling and the bare fact that he had been a *Gymnasial-Lehrer*, or high-school teacher, before retiring for private study and research in 1911. He had attended the Latin *Gymnasium* in Halle, and majored in mathematics and philosophy in the Universities of Halle, Munich, and Berlin. Such educational opportunities in Germany were not for the extremely poor. They suggest that Spengler enjoyed some kind of family support or inheritance.

Available records show little else. One acquaintance gives us a fleeting picture of him carrying his precious manuscript around with him even while in war service, adding to it slowly; but the service is not described, and has been even denied by others. Another remembers his living in a cold, dark Munich tenement, eating in cheap restaurants frequented by labourers, trying to find a publisher, and making occasional visits to his sisters Hildegard and Gertrud, still in the Harz. Another recalls his pleasure in long walks and mountain-climbing; his

delight in talking with peasants, before whom he lost his austerity; his refusal to call doctors for fevers that sent others to bed; his statement that he had a constant headache all the years *The Decline of the West* was being written. It is admittedly a sketchy résumé. In trying to fill it out, some have even resorted to the methods of psychoanalysis, seeing in Spengler's work evidence of a split personality: a man on the one hand introvert, scholarly, even pedantic — on the other, a man with an enormous contempt for most scholars and their tasks, and a secret worship, reflecting defeated longings, for the hero, the general, the man of action. But all this tells us nothing — for nowadays split personalities seem as commonplace as wholly integrated ones are rare.

Spengler has said that he finished the first draft of his first volume before the war in 1914. Yet he revised and expanded his text constantly — first by candlelight, in the bare tenement room in the west part of Munich, and in later years, after the early editions had already appeared, in rather more elegant quarters. From the beginning he insisted that his work was rooted not in the World War of 1914–18, but in a concept of the world as the *coming* war would find it. And indeed his preface to the first edition, which he dated December 1917, before the Germans had yet had their 1918 reverses, expressed the hope that "this book should stand not altogether unworthily beside the military achievements of Germany."

Finding a publisher had not been an easy task. Heavy-going philosophies of history can seldom be regarded as profitable items in any publisher's catalogue; and in the uncertain business world of 1915–17 a publisher had good reason to pause before leaping into the typography-and-paper investment demanded by even a single volume of the Spengler work. When the book did appear, it was from the offices of a Vienna publisher. In the words of one commentator, "it was somewhat as if Emerson, denied publication for his *Representative Men* in Boston and New York, had had to seek it in Ottawa." Not until the work went through two editions, and its success had been demonstrated, was the book taken over in 1919 by C. H. Beck, of Munich. The time was to come, in 1926, when Herr Beck could proudly announce a special edition to commemorate the publication of 100,000 copies.

The book was born into a nation bathed in gloom; it seemed at cursory glance a philosophy of pessimism completely in tune with the mood of the times. Its cataclysmic-sounding title helped along that impression, and undoubtedly advanced the book's sale to a people without hope, and humanly eager to have good logical reasons with which to justify their feeling. A title conceived of by Spengler as a corrective to foolish optimism made him fame in the midst of despair.

The effect was electrical — if not in inspiring the public, at least in stimulating the critics to unparalleled activity. The thesis was a challenge to many of the hypotheses that had been most dearly loved by most of the conventional minds of the day. And though no one seems to have had the equipment and the patience combined to write a critique of the work in all its details, the specialists in the various fields went hurriedly to work, each in his own domain, to dig out the flaws. So vast was this activity that a review of the bibliography of the work had already been printed in book form, and marketed in large numbers, before Spengler's second volume was published. The index of critics' names in Manfred Schroeter's *Der Streit um Spengler* contained some four hundred entries.

Some of the controversy had its amusing aspects. We are told, for instance, that Edith Wharton wrote Spengler upbraiding him for what she called his ignorance of Baroque art. He replied by citing in his support, among other sources, a study in an encyclopædia of widely recognized authority. "I know," Mrs. Wharton wrote in reply, "but I wrote that article, and at the time I was misinformed."

It was undoubtedly possible to challenge various details in Spengler's statements regarding numerous matters; and when the second volume of his work was published, he temporarily withdrew the first volume entirely from the market and subjected it to extensive revision and editing. It was later remarked that many of his critics had not been able to see the wood for the trees; and there seems some justification for thus summing up the rather pedantic excursions of some of his early detractors — many of them now completely unknown and forgotten. On the other hand, such critics were at least excusable, in that the one ground on which Spengler must finally stand or fall — his claim to a hypothesis of history that

permits of forecast – could not at that time be tested; only a future period, in retrospect, could begin to evaluate the success of the Spengler method. Many a thinker has produced brilliantly useful hypotheses on the basis of data that in certain details were rather questionable; thus the Newtonian laws, which have been serviceable to generations of men, were based on observations that we now know to have been an extremely partial recognition of detailed fact.

Even today it seems possible to state that Spengler has received no completely adequate criticism, in his own language or another. On the other hand, his thesis is such that – if it continues to be verified by time – the details supporting it may not seem so vital for debate. Today there are historians like Toynbee, whom Gauss of Princeton University has called "the ablest living historian of civilization," whose view of some of the major details of history seems not too far from Spengler's own; the minor details may safely be left to the various specialists; and the overall thesis is something that the general informed public is already reaching a vantage point to begin judging for itself.

Alfred Knopf published the first volume of *The Decline of the West* in its first American edition in April 1926. In the intervening years the Spengler reputation had spread across the world – at least to those men of the world who must keep their fingers on the pulse of creative thought. Five years previously, in 1921, Mr. Knopf had gone to Munich on his first trip to Europe after the Armistice, to make a call on Herr Beck and discuss American publication of Spengler's history. He found that only a day or two previously a contract had been made with a university press for the American edition of the Spengler work, of which only the first volume had then appeared in German. But two years later that press decided not to proceed with its undertaking, and the book came to Mr. Knopf after all. The authorized translation into English was arranged for by Spengler himself with Major Charles F. Atkinson of London, who was assisted by his wife Hannah Waller Atkinson. Hence, as Mr. Knopf points out, Spengler certainly approved the use of *Decline* for the English rendering of the mooted *Untergang* in his famous title – however much he may have regretted either word later.

Because so little has been recorded about Spengler the man, the personal impressions of Mr. and Mrs. Knopf, who together visited with him several times in the late twenties, are worth quotation. Spengler by then had moved from the Munich slums and was basking in new and unexampled comfort in a great apartment along the Isar River.

"I did not see Spengler," reports Mr. Knopf, "until I returned to Munich in the summer of 1926. I saw him again in the summer of '27, in the late fall of '29, and finally, for the last time, in the winter of '32.

"He was always agreeable, friendly, and interesting. I cannot recall his ever making any complaint about our handling of his work — or any argument, or even discussion, regarding his rate of royalty payments, advances against them, and the like. He spoke no English, though he must have understood it rather well; for my inadequate German could never have got us through one long evening I remember. This was at the *Vierjahreszeiten*, when the talk was largely devoted to an elaborate plan he had for a new atlas of antiquity. For this I tried later, but unsuccessfully, to get him backing from some of our rich Foundations.

"Spengler, whom everyone knew of and so few knew, had at least one friend. At Beck's publishing house there was a sort of confidential clerk named Albers, for whom the sun rose and set every day on Oswald Spengler. Albers was the learned man's devoted slave. I remember him at his happiest when he was invited with us to Spengler's apartment for tea — short and chubby, wreathed in smiles, and encased in a magnificently embroidered silk waistcoat.

"Spengler, on the other hand, was always dressed quietly, in dark suit, dark necktie, and white linen. He was rather tanned than red in complexion, close-shaven — a big soft-spoken man with a pleasant, kindly voice, and an ability to choose simple words in addressing a foreigner, while enunciating them clearly.

"How he lived seemed always a mystery; for the great sale of *The Decline of the West* in Germany took place in larger part during the inflation period, and from the English translation his royalties were never astronomical. Yet he lived most comfortably in an impressive apartment on the Widenmayer-

strasse, overlooking the Isar. Here three living-rooms were strung end-to-end along the street. The walls were lined with books — Spengler more than once expressed to me a playful desire to throw them all into the river — and with paintings by minor Italian masters. These last he took great joy in collecting; like so many Germans, he felt irresistibly drawn, from time to time, to Italy.

"Spengler, curiously enough, was the first person ever to urge on me with real passion the comforts and pleasures of airplane travel. This must have been in 1927 or '28; he regretfully did not succeed in persuading me to fly to Berlin from Munich. By February 1932, when I last saw him, he seemed neither so robust nor so happy as on my earlier visits. Nor were his answers to the questions I put to him, on matters of current interest that had nothing to do with our publisher-author relationship, either clear-cut or direct."

This final comment is of particular interest, offering as it does a suggestion of physical or mental decline which many have remarked also in Spengler's writing in his latter years.

Mrs. Knopf adds details to the picture which suggest some boyish charm in a man generally regarded as forbiddingly austere. She, too, first saw him in his prosperous times, in 1926:

"The apartment was a vast expanse of room, mostly library, with three large windows facing the Isar, a wide entrance hall, and a long expanse of Turkey-red carpet. Spengler was pacing up and down this room, his hands behind his back; the first thing I noticed about him was his vast forehead and bald dome. He explained to me that he did all of his thinking, worked out his problems, pacing up and down on this Turkey-red carpet — something he had always wanted, and had only been able to obtain with the success in Germany of *The Decline of the West*. He struck me as being an extremely human and considerate person — enormous in bulk, very forceful-looking, and — for a man of his stature — exceedingly easy to talk to.

"In 1929, when he came to dinner with us at the *Vierjahreszeiten*, he brought along in courtly Southern fashion a bouquet to present. He came promptly, and pulled out a large gold watch on a chain across a vast front, and showed that he had arrived on the dot; promptness was of vital importance to him,

he said. We then went into the restaurant and he apologized, explaining that he could not eat as much as usual, as he had not been well and was on a diet. Whereupon he proceeded to eat an amount which was really astonishing — even without mention of diet, it would have seemed amazing. He turned on a great deal of charm at this meeting, and proceeded to talk quite brilliantly of all kinds of things. Later we went to the Franziskaner beer *Stube*, not the most chic place in Munich. There, where many of the taxi-drivers and similar patrons apparently knew him well, Spengler drank many seidels of beer and seemed very much at home. There were other similarly characteristic meetings, but whatever the details, I shall always remember him pacing up and down the Turkey-red carpet in his library with his hands behind his back, while discussing the beauties of the Isar River, Munich, and Germany."

By the time of his American publication the sale of Spengler's work had made intellectual history, and Spengler himself was almost a German institution. Nor was the interest in him purely literary. Thus one Gustav Mai-Rodegg travelled all over Germany, from Berlin to the provinces, lecturing on the Spengler concepts before engineering societies. Germany's greatest living authority on ancient history, Eduard Meyer, gave to Spengler's morphological concept of history his own blessing, although reserving judgment on some details. Writers in the most diverse fields came under the stimulus of his thinking. Thus von Jacob-Skötter published *Goethe's* Faust *in the Light of Spengler's Cultural Philosophy*. And Spengler's German publisher, Herr Beck, could write Mr. Knopf fraternally: "More and more we note how the university scholars are taking possession of his results and methods of observation, without (characteristically) mentioning his name."

Following publication of the first volume in English in 1926, Mr. Knopf brought out the second volume of *The Decline of the West* in 1928. In the United States, where people have always bought far fewer books per capita than in most European countries, such a work could hardly be expected to bring publishing returns comparable to those received by the publishers in Munich; but the reception by distinguished American critics was almost uniformly enthusiastic, however

they qualified their judgments as to the Spengler thesis itself. There was no especially sympathetic *milieu*, as had existed in post-war Germany, to help advance the sale; and Spengler prose transcribed faithfully into English made some extremely heavy going for the average American reader. Yet sales of the first volume exceeded 5,000 copies at the end of the first year, at a price of six dollars. Sales of the second volume, priced at seven dollars and a half, amounted to just over 2,600 copies at the end of two months. From that point on, the work was sold as a whole; and, all told, about 21,000 copies have been purchased in the United States, in addition to some 5,000 copies of the first volume bought by readers who apparently lacked the courage to tackle the second.

Considering the nature of the work and its cost, this was by ordinary American standards a notable record. The book was required reading for any serious student of the times; hundreds of thousands who had no intention of trying to read it still knew something about it; and by 1929 interest in it had advanced so far that the *Saturday Evening Post* broke some precedents by devoting to it almost a page of discussion.

Meanwhile in Germany a post-war era was drawing to an end. Spengler had published his *Prussianism and Socialism* two years before the second volume of his major work came into print, and before he had moved into wealth and comfort. The devoted Albers wrote of its origin as follows:

"We were seeing much of each other, Spengler and I, and ate often in a restaurant frequented by the labouring class, and took long walks in the English garden. Frequently he suffered from terrible headaches, which he tried to cure with strong Chinese tea; but during the very period of these headaches he produced his richest and most beautiful thoughts. During one of these walks he once developed – it was under the régime of Eisner – his ideas on socialism. I asked permission to publish this clear and important analysis as soon as possible; but it was not published until ten months later, under the title *Preussentum und Sozialismus*."

The philosopher there asserted that Marx belonged to England. Spengler, of course, viewed English capitalism and Marxian socialism as two sides of the same coin. Both of them, that is, were aspects of thinking in money. Such money-

thought was only the end-product of an age, whether voiced by an Adam Smith or a Karl Marx. On the under side its result was wage-capitalism, with trade unions functioning as trusts to lift up wages. On the upper side capitalism was only socialism from above — the international socialism of the Stock Exchange.

Such ideas were to have enormous repercussions in years not long thereafter, under the practical hands of Hitler and Schacht; but at the moment Spengler was more interested in denouncing the November revolution and the moderate Social Democrats for their deals with the trade unions, and in calling on Germany to rise to a new order. This was to be a new brand of socialism — not that of Marx and the proletariat, but aristocratic, nationalist, and warlike.

Thus the philosopher began to take an interest in practical politics. The expanding Nazi Party undoubtedly found Spengler an enormously useful guide in formulating its program — in so far as this was formulated — and in devising techniques for the seizure and wielding of power. On the other hand, it was the party that used Spengler, and not the reverse; one example is the manner in which Spengler's identification of Marxianism and finance capitalism was taken over bodily, then mixed politically with anti-Semitism by identifying the Jews with the internationalists.

The political uses to which his thought was put undoubtedly left Spengler an unhappy man. From the beginning he seems to have eyed the Nazis askance, apparently without realizing that they were the dawning fulfilment of his own previsions. In 1924, for instance, Spengler did not hesitate to sneer at their "Romanticism, party spectacles with flags, parades, and uniforms," and he even referred obliquely to Hitler as a "heroic tenor." And he was far from being in personal agreement with much of the party program. Thus in 1931, in discussing the nature of property in *Man and Technics*, he portrayed man as a carnivorous beast of prey who by nature could tolerate no limitation on his property rights: "Never does he tolerate an equal in his den. . . . Property is the domain in which one exercises unlimited power. . . . It is not a right to mere having, but the sovereign right to do as one will with one's own."

Spengler's failure to agree with the Nazi theories on race was proclaimed boldly in 1933 in his *The Hour of Decision:* "What is needed is not a pure race, but a strong one, which has a nation within it." Spengler viewed the Jews as differing from the "Aryans" primarily in the fact that they were a far older race, in a much later stage of the Culture cycle. As Carl Dreher has declared:

"There is no overt anti-Semitism in Spengler's books. He detested Marx, but the worst Spengler could say about him was, 'His thinking is purely English.' The Englishmen whom Spengler mentions with approval, 'as possessed of the true political instinct,' are Burke, Pitt, Wellington and Disraeli."[1]

The Hour of Decision brought Spengler down completely from the serene mount of prophet and philosopher into the loud arena. The Nazis were already in power; and though Spengler declared that the first hundred-odd pages of his new book had been set up and printed before their advent, this could draw no veil over the fact that it was in many aspects far from orthodox Nazi working doctrine. Hitler was later to be quoted by Rauschnig as saying that Nazi anti-Semitism had been invented as an irresistible revolutionary weapon; but whatever the truth, it was an important weapon, and no interference with such matters by an "intellectual," on mere ideational grounds, was to be brooked by fact-men making history after Spengler's own definition.

It was a situation full of irony that future historians will hardly miss. There is some evidence, interlinear as well as hearsay, to indicate that Spengler truly did not recognize in Hitler one of the Cæsars whose coming he had foreseen. Arthur Zweiniger rebuked him; and then he was taken in hand by Johann von Leers, Director of the Division of Foreign Policy and Foreign Relations of the German Institute for Politics, who denounced him from the pulpit. In the face of the party machine, little was left for Spengler but silence. In 1935 he wrote a *Contribution to the History of the Second Millennium, B.C.*, and there is a story that he had no way of calling attention to it except through writing cards to acquaintances. Not long after, in the night of May 8, 1936, he died quietly in bed.

[1] *Virginia Quarterly Review*, April 1939.

His sisters buried him as quietly, announcing that this was according to his wish; and they asked that expressions of sympathy be omitted. So ended the days of one of our century's most extraordinarily influential men.

The measure of his effect and influence will perhaps be a matter for study and inquiry for years to come. By his own philosophy, certainly, he could not be a causal influence in our era's great revolution; he could at best be only a coincident expression of its forces. But whether his rôle be considered as prime cause, or contemporary phenomenon, or as that of mysterious prophet who found himself out of place in the future he had truly prophesied, most of the important questions are yet to be answered.

There can be small doubt that Spengler's reputation had nothing added to it by anything he wrote after *The Decline of the West.* As happens with many men, he had one great work in him, and all the rest was residue and froth. The indefinable glow that seemed to illumine so many pages of his masterpiece had disappeared from the thought of the other writings, and what remained was sometimes rather ugly dross. Whether this might have resulted from the drying up of the well — or from some sort of psychic deterioration — or merely from the impact of actual revolution on the man who had previously been viewing it from afar — is for those to argue who can.

The Decline of the West was translated into Spanish, Russian, English, French, Italian, and Arabic. Like all books that attain the rank of greatness, it is not merely the product of a man named Spengler, but a creation that, once formed, has had a life and being of its own. Thus, when Spengler died, an editorial writer far off in America wrote in the *New York Times:*

"Whatever may be the final reputation of Oswald Spengler, whatever the fate of his philosophy or predictions . . . whether or not his theories corresponded to reality, he painted a world panorama that, like a great play or a great symphony, is its own justification for existence."

There could perhaps be no greater tribute a man could wish in our times.

A Note on the Type
IN WHICH THIS BOOK IS SET

This book was set on the Linotype in Janson, a recutting made direct from the type cast from matrices (now in possession of the Stempel foundry, Frankfurt am Main) made by Anton Janson some time between 1660 and 1687.

Of Janson's origin nothing is known. He may have been a relative of Justus Janson, a printer of Danish birth who practised in Leipzig from 1614 to 1635. Some time between 1657 and 1668 Anton Janson, a punch-cutter and type-founder, bought from the Leipzig printer Johann Erich Hahn the type-foundry which had formerly been a part of the printing house of M. Friedrich Lankisch. Janson's types were first shown in a specimen sheet issued at Leipzig about 1675. Janson's successor, and perhaps his son-in-law, Johann Karl Edling, issued a specimen sheet of Janson types in 1689. His heirs sold the Janson matrices in Holland to Wolffgang Dietrich Erhardt.

COMPOSED, PRINTED, AND BOUND BY
The Plimpton Press, NORWOOD, MASS.
PAPER MADE BY *S. D. Warren Co.*, BOSTON